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ABSTRACT

This handbook is designed to help student teachers and beginning teachers handle the "surprises" they encounter on the job. The scenarios in the book identify critical incidents and potential situations teachers are likely to face and offer help in keeping teachers out of unpleasant situations or suggesting courses of action when they find themselves in such situations. Many of these anticipated situations are drawn from the field experience diaries of student teachers and real-life experiences of beginning teachers, as well as from the experience and observations of cooperating teachers and university teacher educators. The suggestions made are based on accepted program and classroom management techniques in the field of vocational education, although most of the techniques can be applied to academic subjects as well. Topics covered in the short vignettes include the following: managing students in and around the classroom, in the laboratory, and on field trips; interacting with parents and teachers; getting along with administrators; and notes from beginning teachers. The book also covers three essential teacher competencies and provides tips for getting students ready to control their behavior in new situations. (KC)

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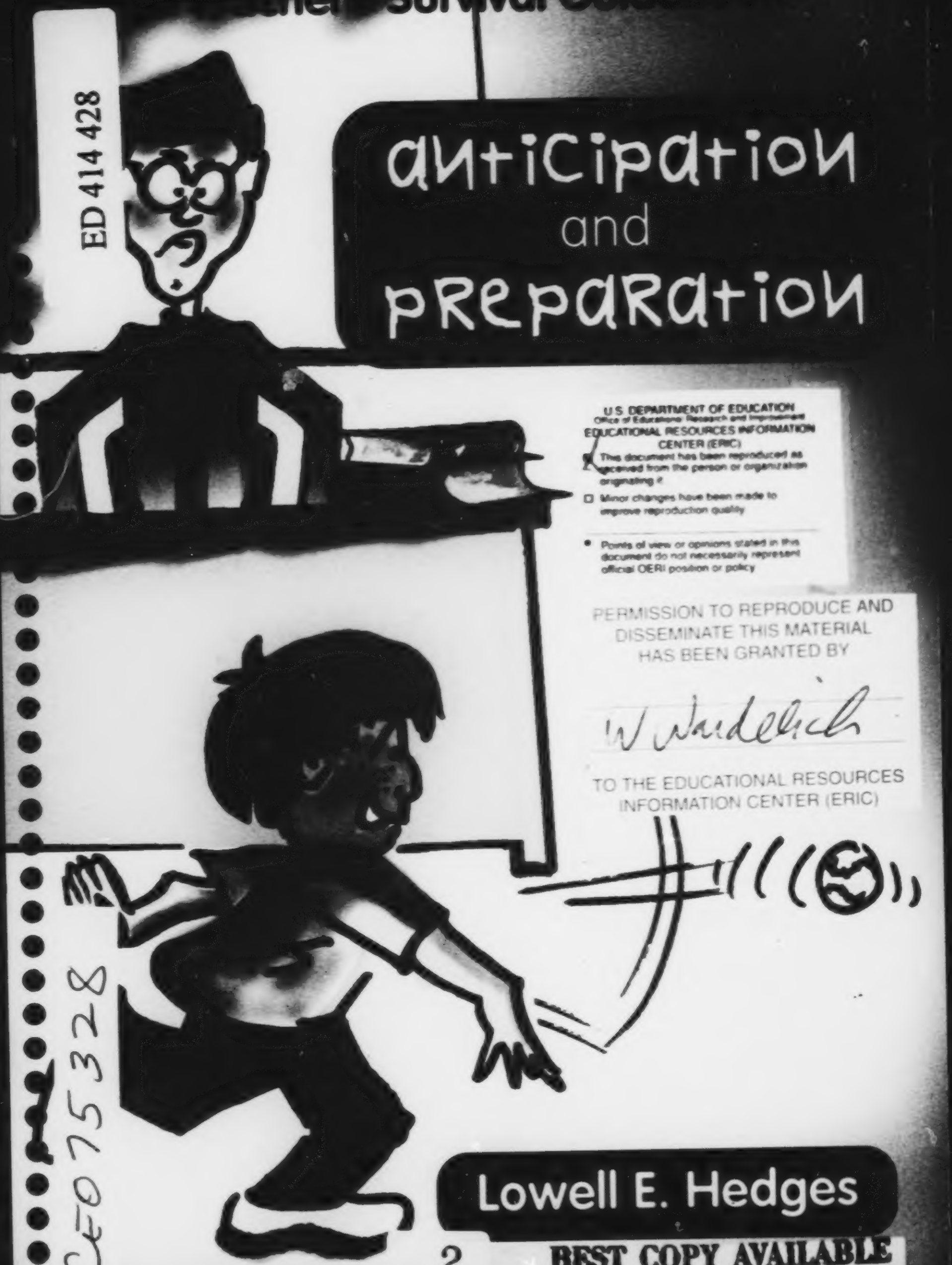
Teacher's Survival Guidebook

anticipation and preparation



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A Teacher's Survival Guidebook

anticipation and preparation

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Foreword

Helping teachers succeed rather than allowing teachers to fail is the theme of this publication. Lowell Hedges, both school administrator and teacher educator, has chosen a difficult task – to provide resources to teachers to help ensure their success. He can not guarantee teacher success; no one can. Regardless of their personal and professional experience and education, some new teachers succeed while others do not. Predicting who will succeed is not an easy task; in fact, it may be impossible. But Dr. Hedges has had years of experience in teaching prospective and practicing teachers and observing beginners in the real world of teaching. He is convinced that efforts can and should be made to help teachers "survive."

The material contained in this book is designed for that purpose – to help teachers make it on their own. Dr. Hedges uses the problem-solving approach to teaching teachers, just as he expects teachers to use that approach with their students. He bases his material on commonly-occurring situations to provide the teacher and the teacher educator with the proper perspective. His focus is clear: guide teachers to make decisions in teaching that will bring about student learning. When students learn, teachers succeed. And when teachers succeed, they survive!

R. Kirby Barrick
Former Professor and Chair
Department of Agricultural Education
The Ohio State University

Preface

This handbook, *Anticipation and Preparation: Two Keys to Survival* is a guidebook for handling the "surprises" new and beginning teachers encounter. They may have been taught all the pedagogical skills, right attitudes, and needed understandings in their traditional education courses. But they will not be prepared for many of the critical incidents they inevitably encounter on the job. This book is written to help them avoid as much as possible the "foot-in-mouth" situations that require "major surgery" to remedy.

The scenarios in this book identify critical incidents and potential situations teachers are likely to face. They offer help in keeping teachers out of unpleasant situations or suggesting courses of action when they find themselves in such situations.

Many of these ***anticipated situations*** are right out of the field experience diaries of student teachers and real-life experiences of beginning teachers. They give the contents the ring of authenticity. These same new teachers often suggest the ways to prevent or correct the situation. Some of the anticipated situations also come from observations of cooperating teachers, university teacher educators, local supervisors, and state department supervisors – those who have worked with and supervised student teachers and beginning teachers.

The situations and accompanying suggestions for preventing or correcting them show the reader clearly that there is no single way to resolve them, no guaranteed quick-fix. However, the suggestions made are based on accepted program and classroom management techniques in the field of vocational education. Teacher educators, supervisors, and experienced teachers who are considered "master teachers" have all made contributions to the recommendations for resolution.

The Functions of a Teacher

A major concern of student teachers and beginning teachers is whether they are capable of performing all the functions of a vocational teacher. These functions are:

1. Teaching – in class, in groups, and individually
2. Administration and Management – planning, management, and operation of the vocational education program
3. Occupational Technician/ Subject Area Specialist – having the needed knowledge and skills for the technical, management and production operations of specific business and industry occupations
4. Student Counselor – friend to the student and often parent substitute

Student teachers and beginning teachers have many fears and anxieties in common. They of course have all the problems of the regular teacher (except those that rest with the cooperating teacher in the setting of student teaching). But they also have the challenges that are associated with being the "new kid on the block," such as

- the "problem" students they inherit with their accompanying problems;
- the entrenched school and program traditions that are not of their making;
- living up (or down) to the previous teacher's teaching style; and
- being an outsider to the established "family" of various community groups – the faculty, support staff, administration, and citizens.

The educational environment for the beginning teacher holds enough natural challenges and potential problems without adding challenges the teachers unknowingly create themselves. The beginner who can anticipate potential troublesome situations and avoid getting caught up in them will greatly increase his/her chances for survival. The goal of this book is to increase those chances.

— Lowell E. Hedges

Acknowledgments

This book has been a cooperative venture in many respects. Student teachers and beginning teachers of vocational education have contributed their experiences with problem people and situations and have revealed ways they have used (not always successfully) to prevent or resolve these situations.

Cooperating teachers and supervising teacher educators, through their perceptive observations of teachers at work, have identified critical incidents that novice teachers (and experienced ones as well) may face. These cooperating educators have provided suggested courses of action to either prevent or resolve the critical situation. Thanks to these teachers and supervisors for sharing these sometimes-traumatic incidents.

Thanks go to Doctors Robert Warmbrod, L.H. Newcomb, and R. Kirby Barrick, former chairs of the Department of Agricultural Education, The Ohio State University, for their interest, encouragement, and assistance in helping to provide this book. Their interest counteracts the all-too-prevalent philosophy of "sink or swim" for beginning teachers in the field of education.

No publication of this kind reaches potential readers without the assistance of the specialists who take care of the mechanics of its construction. Diana Morawetz, Vi Mendicino, Terri Osterman, Michelle Stevens Callahan, and others have turned very rough drafts into legible manuscripts. Special thanks goes to Nicki King of the Ohio Agricultural Education Curriculum Materials Service for her patient and expert editing of the final draft and for the final page layout. The cover design was provided by Amy Boye of Curriculum Materials Service.

The cartoon art is the valuable contribution of Richard L. Dobec, Assistant Professor from ATI in Wooster.

Finally, thanks to members of my family for their patience and understanding concerning the time and energy required for such an endeavor.

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Introduction

How to Use This Book

This book uses the case study approach to help teachers learn general principles of program and classroom management. Professionals with special skills and interest in vocational teaching discuss a wide array of situations. These contributions point to fulfillment of the four functions of the vocational teacher.

Common potential problem situations in program and classroom management are identified in this guidebook, and suggested prevention or resolution techniques are offered. Student teachers and beginning teachers will find this material useful in preparation for teaching. They should be able to think through what teaching and management skills they will need before they ever walk into the classroom or lab. To this end, the teachers may achieve the greatest benefit by studying the book from cover to cover. However, if a particular area or function holds the most fears or anxieties for the teacher, he or she may want to concentrate on that area.

Instructors of teaching methods courses can make good use of this book to alert student teachers and beginning teachers to "real life" situations in the educational world. Novice teachers should get a clearer picture of what to expect and how to react during the exciting, challenging, and traumatic period of "the beginner." For this period can be very stressful for them. Unfortunately, these teachers are too often left on their own to handle all the complexities of being a successful vocational teacher. This is unfair to them, the students, and the profession.

This book, then, is for these beginners. It should provide them with the "intensive care" they need, helping them anticipate problem situations and suggesting ways to prevent or resolve them.

Introducing Three Essential Competencies

I have been the supervising teacher educator for over 125 beginning teachers. I have personally supervised over 300 student teachers. Most of these teachers and potential teachers survived and became effective teachers in their respective subect areas.

Some did not survive, however. After one, two, or three years, they decided to leave the profession altogether, or their contract was not renewed by their school district. Unfortunately, many of these non-survivors need not have been lost to the profession. I analyzed their competencies as teachers and concluded that there were one or more of three essential competencies they lacked. The competencies are:

- being "with it,"
- being in charge, and
- being student-centered in teaching.

I believe a teacher needs all three to survive and grow in the teaching profession.

First, there are outlines that describe these three competencies in detail – what specific skills, attitudes, and understandings a teacher needs. Next, in the scenarios, teachers can discover what might happen if they do not develop these three competencies.

My hope is that this publication will not only help the new teacher survive in the teaching profession, but grow to become a Master Teacher.

Summary of Three Essential Competencies

1. Being "with it"
    - Is in tune with surroundings
    - Anticipates students' actions and reactions
    - Is aware of direction and pace of class
    - Intervenes appropriately
2. Being in charge
    - Directs momentum and direction of class activities
    - Has appropriate degree of control and organization
    - Is well-prepared; knowledgeable
    - Likes to teach; is self-confident
3. Being student-centered in teaching
    - Builds lesson around students' present and future needs
    - Creates student ownership of learning activities
    - Creates nurturing, loving, learning atmosphere
    - Teaches students a subject, not a subject to students

The Three Essential Teacher Competencies

1. Being "with it"

- Recognizes verbal and nonverbal behaviors that could lead to class problems, e.g., inattention, boredom, etc.
- Can keep class going while attending to students' behavior and responses.
- Senses what is going on with the class and individuals.
- Uses appropriate interventions and adjustments as feedback from students is received.
- Is "smart;" knows about teaching, learning, the subject taught, people in general, and students in particular. Uses this knowledge to keep class moving.
- Can empathize with feelings; cares for students and is able to show that caring through actions and words.
- Supports students with positive comments and draws them further into the learning process.
- Uses humor; speaks with enthusiasm.
- Is able to restate questions and comments accurately because of being in touch with students individually and as a group.
- Is up-to-date technically.
- Uses purposeful movements; is able to change body speed and motion to fit the action of the class (sitting, standing, walking).
- Knows what is going on in the community.

- Seriously studies history and background of the school, community, department, and students.
- Interacts with faculty and community; emulates best skills of colleagues.

2. Being in charge

- Leads discussion skillfully; is a capable facilitator. Moves at a challenging pace.
- Shows business-like behavior.
- Concentrates on what is going on. Anticipates student actions and reactions.
- Is aware of student needs.
- Stands up straight; uses purposeful movements; has eyes and arms open; uses eye contact.
- Responds to questions and comments with body as well as voice; acknowledges with body as well as with voice.
- Has a voice loud enough to be heard well, but not unpleasant.
- Uses clear instructions and wording.
- Is able to pause without discomfort.
- Knows and uses student names.
- Recognizes and uses humor when appropriate.
- Remembers and refers to previous actions and comments in the class.
- Thinks and communicates logically.
- Prepares lessons well.
- Senses what is going on with the class and individuals.
- Is friendly, but keeps clear boundaries.

- Respects the rights of the individual student.
- Uses an appropriate degree of control and organization in the classroom and lab.
- Has high expectations of student performance.
- Is serious about the job of teaching.
- Encourages group ownership of goals and achievements.
- Involves students and uses their expertise.

3. Being student-centered in teaching

- Holds beliefs and values that relate to caring for the individual.
- Wants to know about each student so as to be of the most help.
- Shares personally with students; establishes a two-way relationship.
- Is keenly aware of student needs.
- Structures the daily lesson plans around solving students' present and future needs.
- Creates group ownership of the objectives of the class, lesson, program.
- Has the ability to listen.
- Creates a loving atmosphere.
- Makes the instruction comprehensible to students. Uses relevant examples.
- Involves all students.
- Stimulates thinking and reasoning.
- Takes time to get to know the individual student. Attends school functions; interacts with students.

- Is willing to give up and hand over some of the direction and control of the learning process to individual students.

Getting Students Ready for (Re)Action

THE SITUATION

In a normal school day or in a new activity, your students sometimes don't live up to your expectations. Some of the possible "new" activities are a field trip; small group learning team in the classroom or lab; moving from the classroom to another part of the building; failure to achieve objectives of the group; destruction of property; or actions embarrassing to the class or school.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Use the principle of **readiness for reaction.** *Concept:* Knowledge of possible behavior can be used to prevent that behavior from occurring – a type of negative response to the stimulus.

You will lead the students mentally through an activity in which they are to participate. You will help them identify possible areas of undesirable behavior. If students can recognize how they might be tempted to "misbehave," they can also be helped to control their behavior and prevent the undesirable action.

Example:

Teacher: "This is your first opportunity to work on landscape maintenance in teams. Each team is assigned to a different area of plantings around the building. Before you go to your locations, let's consider for a moment what factors or actions might keep a team from achieving their assignment. Any ideas?"

Students: "A member of one of the teams might goof off and let the others do the work."

Teacher: "How could you prevent that happening?"

Students: "You could make one of us the team leader who will make sure we all work."

"You could give each person on the team a specific job to do. If the job doesn't get done, you'll know who worked and who didn't."

"I think the team can handle the goof-off."

Teacher: "So, are you saying that if someone on the team tries to put off all the work on the other team members, the team can "force" that person to work? OK, I'll leave it up to each team to make sure everyone works."

"What other things might you be tempted to do while you are working with this team?"

Students: "Look in the windows at other students."

"Holler at other students as they walk by."

"Throw dirt at each other."

"Talk too loud and bother classes in session."

Teacher: Think about it. Do you ***have*** to do any of these things? Say you feel the urge to throw a clod of dirt at someone. Do you have to obey that urge?

Students: "No, I guess not."

Teacher: OK. If you feel the urge to do one of these negative things, remember that you don't ***have*** to do it; you ***can*** resist the urge. You can do the job expected of you as mature young adults. I expect your best work and cooperation. We will all anticipate praise from the teachers, administrators, and other staff rather than complaints. OK, let's get to work."

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In and Around the Classroom

The interrupter

THE SITUATION

No matter how many times you've repeated your policy about raising hands to answer questions, Ginger invariably blurts out the answer before you can call on a student. Sometimes she responds before you finish the question.

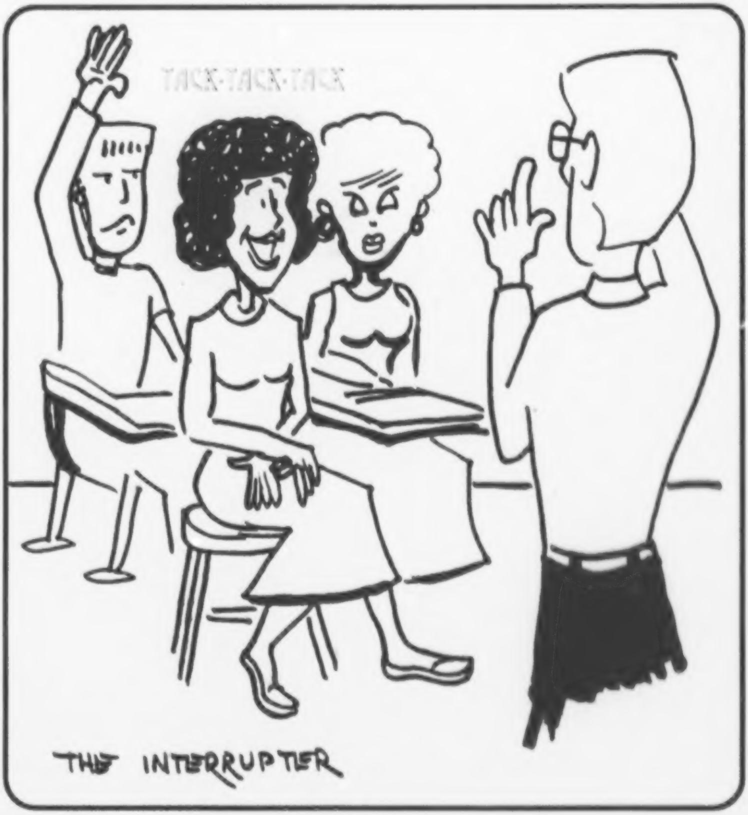
PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

There are several things **not to do:**

1. Don't "blurt back" or make an issue out of the interruption. Such a response would only make matters worse, showing Ginger your anxiety over the situation.
2. Don't ignore the student, but plan your recognition of students like Ginger.
3. Don't reprimand the student in front of other students.

Do try some of these specific strategies:

1. Acknowledge Ginger in one of the following ways:
   - Make eye contact.
   - Use a slight hand movement or hold up your hand like a stop sign to Ginger, but maintain eye contact with the other students. In this way you have given Ginger recognition, but not her interruption.



2. Plan for Ginger's participation. Say her name before you ask the question.
3. Give Ginger extra, positive attention at times when she is not interrupting.
4. To help Ginger control her anxiety (a possible reason for her blurting out the answer), speak softly and calmly.

The class "know-it-all"

THE SITUATION

One student is an active "know-it-all," disrupting the class.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

The student often does have considerable experience/ knowledge in the subject being studied. Challenge the student to provide supplementary information for the lesson. Build up his/her self-esteem in a positive way. Help the student to be a legitimate "resident expert."

The rooster

THE SITUATION

One student is over-participating and dominating the class discussion.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Meet with the over-eager student. Tell the student why you are regulating his/her participation. Also, try to determine whether the student is using this type of participation primarily to gain attention. If so, determine other ways that the student can develop better self-esteem.

"You never covered *this* stuff"

THE SITUATION

Students who do poorly on a test accuse you of failing to teach them the information they needed.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Make sure that your exams are composed of material from your handouts and quizzes. The students should have had these in their notebooks and studied them.

"I'm flunking because of you!"

THE SITUATION

A student is angry because he/she is failing the course.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Give students progress reports periodically throughout the grading period, e.g., midway in the period. Don't wait till the end of the term and then spring a nasty surprise. Also, make certain that students understand what is required for each grade level – for an A, a B, etc.

The chatterbox

THE SITUATION

Some students talk in class – not just once in a while, but almost constantly. They may talk in a whisper or low voice. But it is disturbing to you and the other students. When you ask those students to quit talking, you get only momentary relief.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

You have several strategies available to you. The most effective one depends, of course, on the student involved and the environment.

1. Move the student away from his/her friends. Isolate.
2. Ask the talker questions. Avoid sarcasm and a show of annoyance.
3. Use the "icy stare" technique. Stop talking in the middle of a sentence and rivet your eyes on the talker. (This technique will not work with the most brazen student, who relishes the added attention.)
4. Do punish, but offer a choice of the punishment to the serious offender. For example, "Which do you prefer, Jamie, a detention or volunteer time with the lawn maintenance staff?"
5. Try nonverbal communication. Move into the offender's "personal space." Or use gestures such as the open hand facing the student.

However, if the offending student is really hostile, mouthy, and seriously disruptive, you will need to use different techniques. It is wisest to direct that kind of student to the school psychologist for professional help.

"Are you tryin' to rip me off?"

THE SITUATION

A student claims to have paid you for a notebook, but you don't remember. The student is upset and threatens to go to the principal with the problem.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Make it a practice to write a receipt immediately when you receive money from a student (and keep your own record). If you failed to write a receipt or keep a record, take the student's word for the transaction.

"Won't do it; can't make me"

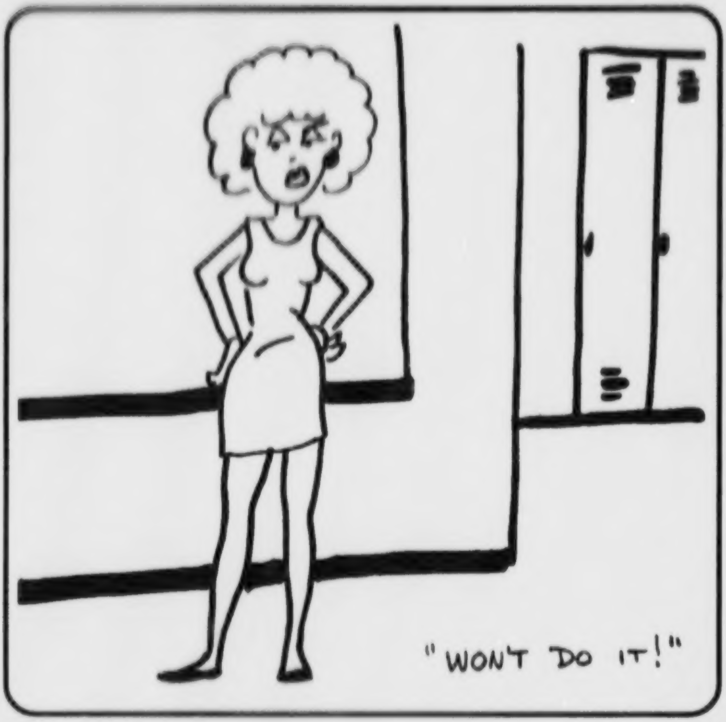
THE SITUATION

At least twice a week Samantha refuses to do the assigned work in class or at home. Overall, she appears to be a negative, uncooperative student. You have to take a lot of extra time to get even a little cooperation and productivity from her.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Consider some of the following suggestions:

1. In your routine dealing with students, be sure to treat all students the same, including students like Samantha. If she perceives favored treatment of others (real or imagined), she will respond with pouting, brooding, or refusing to work.
2. Try to discover the reason for Samantha's refusal to work. Check for reading disabilities or other possible causes. Confer with the guidance department about the situation; they may know something you don't.
3. Calmly avoid confrontation with Samantha when she refuses to work. Students like Samantha know that being negative and contrary is a sure way to gain attention.
4. Praise/Reward Samantha when she is willing to cooperate.

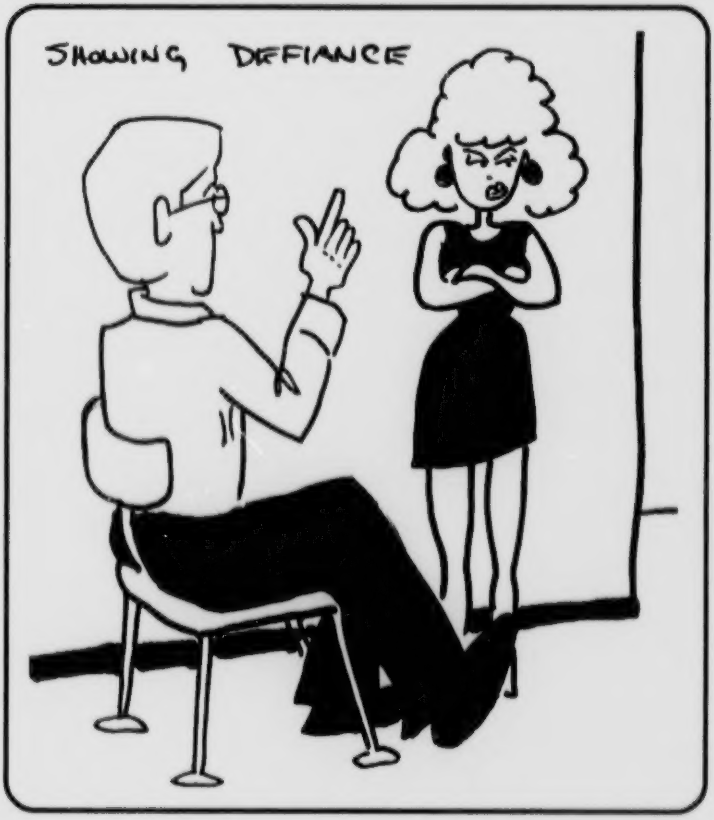


5. Try to focus on situations in which Samantha shows an interest. Praise her for work done in those interest areas.
6. Hold a private conference with Samantha to discuss her attitude.
7. Settle for small gains. Reduce the criteria for doing a task correctly. Lower your expectations.

The defiant student

THE SITUATION

As the school year progresses, Jamie becomes more and more openly defiant of the directions you give and your efforts to maintain class momentum.



PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Try to determine whether Jamie is having to deal with special problems. Contact the guidance department and other teachers who have Jamie in their classes. If they are having similar problems, the cause of Jamie's defiance probably lies outside your program and the school. But if yours is the only class in which Jamie shows defiance, you need to examine your own teaching and curriculum and, possibly, attitude.

Don't believe everything you hear

THE SITUATION

Some of your students tell "stories" about their lives. These stories (lies) **do** tend to get your attention and that of their classmates.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Listen to the student, but don't pay him/her special attention. Check out the stories later to find out if they are true or all lies. As a young teacher, don't take to heart all that you are told.

"You don't like me because you never liked my brother!"

THE SITUATION

When you reprimanded Vince after class on Tuesday, his reaction really startled you. He lashed out, "You're doing this because you want to get back at my brother! You never liked him, so you don't like me, either. I don't have a chance in your class! Just because I got into trouble last year doesn't mean I'm going to mess up this year. Who've you been talking to?" You begin to wonder what your true feelings are about the two brothers. Are you really prejudiced against Vince?

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Comparing your students to their siblings is usually hurtful to your students. They feel they are not accepted on their own merits as unique individuals. They feel trapped by the reputation of their brother or sister, regardless of whether it is good or bad.

Reassure students like Vince that bygones are bygones. Work on getting rid of your own bad feelings if you know they are present. Forget what happened last year; begin anew this year. Encourage Vince to show what he can do in your class.

Have a private conference with Vince to explain the reasons for your reprimand. Assure him that his brother's reputation did not influence your actions. Be patient; it may take time to improve Vince's self-esteem.

Smart mouth

THE SITUATION

Alexis is a "smart aleck." Her remarks are past funny. She is really obnoxious. Her air of superiority irritates you and her peers. You have tried punishing her. It didn't help; in fact, punishment seemed to make her behavior worse.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Try some of the following ways to treat Alexis in school and in private:

1. Remove her protective shield. Her behavior could be due to an inferiority complex. Challenge Alexis to demonstrate her abilities during the class or lab–by production.
2. Never argue with students like Alexis. You will just be "flaunting your authority."
3. Do not fight fire with fire, talking like a smart aleck yourself. Responding in kind will get a reaction from the other students (the kind she wants). You will only be reinforcing her weakness.
4. If at all possible, keep silent. Students like Alexis can't stand silence. Their feelings of inferiority really emerge. But at this point, they are more receptive to teacher guidance and professional counsel.

"Gotta dance!"

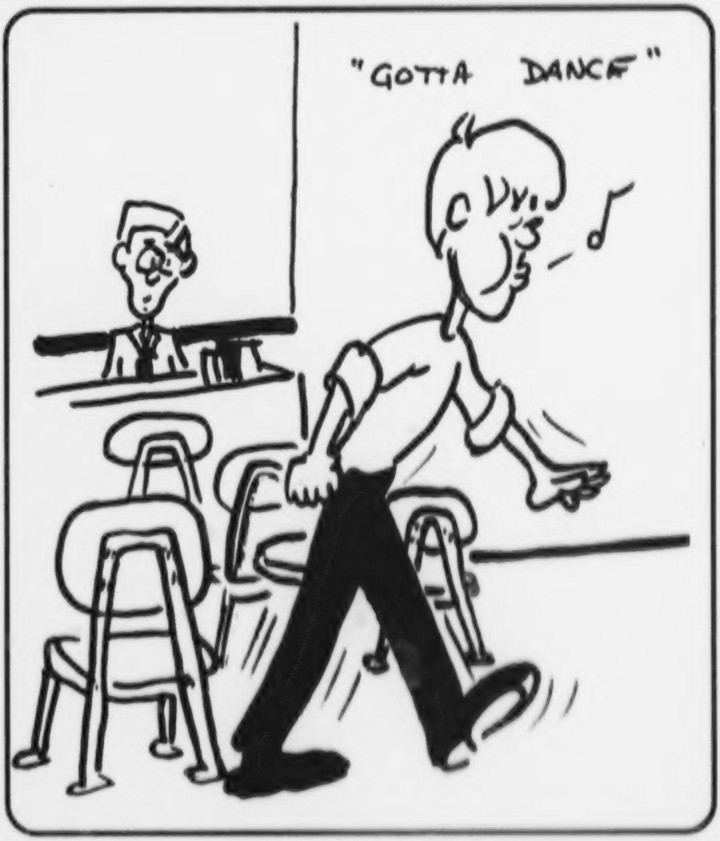
THE SITUATION

Arnold does not sit still for long. He is constantly leaving his assigned seat and wandering around. His explanation: "I can't help it. Mom says I was born this way – with 'itchy feet'."

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Here are several things you might try to help Arnold settle down:

1. Seat him in the front of the room away from the windows. This should reduce distractions.
2. Keep as much structure as you can in your class and lab. Be consistent from day to day.
3. Supplement your verbal messages with visual clues. For example, if you want Arnold to get his diskette from his desk, hold up a diskette.
4. Have Arnold run errands for you. This will give him opportunity to exercise his "itchy feet."


"GOTTA DANCE"

Behind-the scenes agitator

THE SITUATION

Whenever the girls in your class get into disputes over friendships, favoritism, boyfriends, other teachers, other classes, or whatever, you notice that Angie is always present. She doesn't appear to be actively involved in the disputes. But you wonder to what extent she is involved in the agitation.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Often the "innocent bystander" plays a hidden leadership role in a dispute. The biggest fear of this agitator is exposure, because he/she is basically a coward and a pretender. This type of person cannot accept the responsibility of a leadership role in the situation.

Take the time for a private conversation with the person you suspect is an agitator. Tell him/her tactfully of your suspicions. Inform the person that you feel responsible to check further into your suspicions. Once the disguise has been discovered, the student usually makes an effort to improve his/her behavior.

No losing face

THE SITUATION

A disruptive student challenges your authority in front of the class. You are tempted to defend your authority by "putting him down" in front of the class.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Don't do it! Even if you win the confrontation, you are the loser. Generally, it's bad policy to make a student lose face in front of his/her peers. Remove the student from the immediate area, out of earshot of classmates, so you won't be overheard. Then you and the disruptive student will know that you won, but he/she won't feel that the whole class witnessed the episode.

"Gotta talk NOW"

THE SITUATION

Occasionally you have to counsel with a student privately right away. Class is in session, but this can't wait.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Talk with the student just outside the room, standing so that you have at least visual control of the room. Never leave the lab or classroom unsupervised.

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She's always late

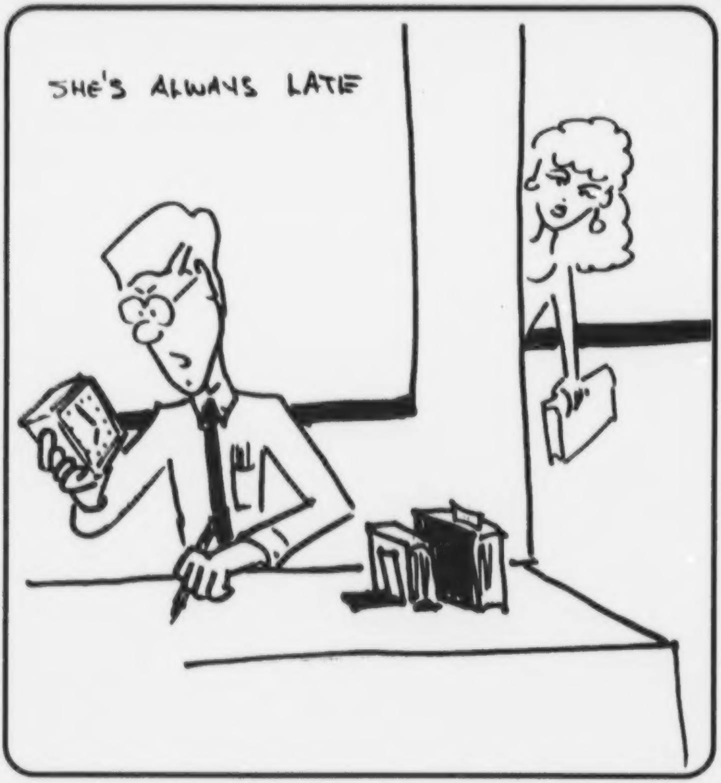
THE SITUATION

At least twice a week, you can count on Jodi being late to your first period class. Invariably, you have to take several minutes to get her caught up with the others, complete a tardy slip, and fill in your records. By this time, you have lost the attention of the other students. It will take you even more time to get the momentum going in the lesson.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

With the steps you take, make it your goal to avoid losing class time dealing with habitual tardiness.

1. If possible, try to determine the reasons for the student's tardiness. Many times tardiness develops because there is no orderliness in the student's life outside of school. The student will need extra guidance to organize time.
2. Always assume that all students (even Jodi) will eventually be in class. Place supplies, daily work sheets, etc. on Jodi's desk even if she hasn't arrived yet.
3. Seat the chronically late student next to the door so he/she can enter quietly with the least disturbance.



4. Do not recognize or talk to that person on arrival. Wait until after class for private consultation.
5. Make both the administration and Jodi's parents aware of the situation.

Beating the system

THE SITUATION

Eddie's prime goal in life seems to be finding ways to get out of work. He works hard at "beating the system" and loves to brag to his friends about how smart he is.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Eddie can be clever, but you must not accept or tolerate his behavior. He will misinterpret a tolerant reaction and think you appreciate his cleverness. As long as he ignores your rules, you can't treat him like everyone else in the class.

Monitor Eddie's productivity closely. You know Eddie will work to get what he wants, so keep the pressure on to produce. If he doesn't produce, he receives only what he deserves. Check with Eddie's parents and work with them. They have probably experienced the same attitude and lack of productivity at home. Praise Eddie for any positive changes in his behavior.

Z-z-z-z-z

THE SITUATION

A student falls asleep in your class more than once.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

You need to investigate why the student fell asleep in class. Visit with the sleeper personally in private. Try to determine whether the student is ill. If not, has the student been working late on a job? Is the student depressed? bored with the lesson?

Including the loner

THE SITUATION

You have a student named Eloise in your class. She isn't giving you any trouble. In fact, some days you hardly remember that she is there. The guidance counselor calls such students "loners." Other students tend to leave Eloise alone. She seems to want to be left alone, but you wonder if that is her need. Perhaps she needs help to overcome this "loner" image.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

A loner is an introvert. You can't make an extrovert out of him/her overnight. So, go slow in your attempts to get Eloise out of her "shell." If you move too quickly, Eloise will realize what you are doing and will probably resent it, especially if other students are involved in "helping" her.

Slowly involve Eloise with other students. Pair Eloise up with quiet students and choose quiet activities for them. In time, the students and situations will allow Eloise to express herself with confidence. Proceed quietly and slowly. Discuss Eloise with the guidance counselor to find out more helpful information about Eloise's background.

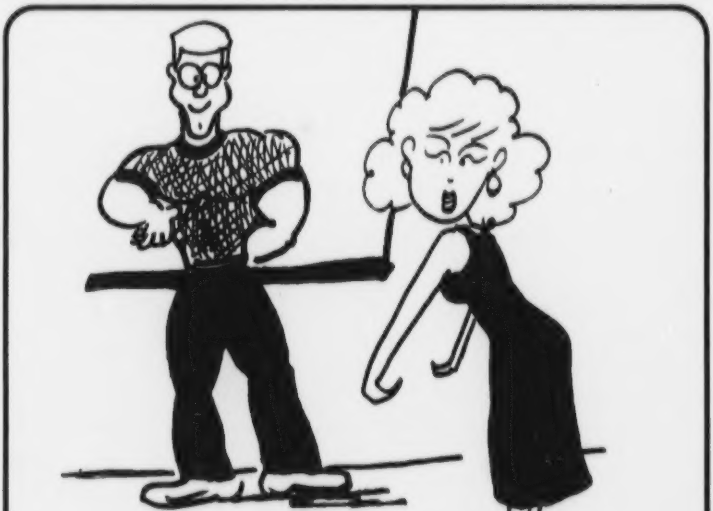
"What a hunk!"

THE SITUATION

You are a male teacher, single and reasonably attractive. Several girls in the class have a "case" for you.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Do nothing to encourage your "fans." Wear baggy clothes. Tell them you have a steady girlfriend. Don't talk to them alone, and keep your hands physically *off* them. Do not agree to meet with one of them after class unless someone else in authority is with you. Remember that charges of sexual harassment could easily result with the potential of ruining your career.



"What a babe!"

THE SITUATION

You are a single female teacher, good-looking and attractive. You notice that at least one of your male students can't keep his eyes off you.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Do nothing to encourage your admirers. Avoid flashy, tight clothes. Tell them you have a steady boyfriend. Don't talk to a male student alone, and never agree to meet him alone after class unless someone else in authority is with you. Consider the reality of a possible charge of sexual harassment (enticement) and how easily it could destroy your career. Keep your supervisor informed of any worrisome situation that arises.

Excuses, excuses

THE SITUATION

A student gives you the excuse that he/she can't go on a field trip or complete a given assignment because of a personal problem or handicap.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Keep a personal file on each student containing demographic data and a record of any mental, physical or emotional problems that may hinder the student's performance. Keep these records in a secure location.

"I can work better here than in study hall"

THE SITUATION

Students who have not completed their homework for other subjects ask to come to the vocational classroom to work during study hall.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Encourage students to complete their homework on time in other subject areas. Do not allow them to come to the vocational classroom during study hall.

"I need another copy; lost mine"

THE SITUATION

You have provided students special handouts and given them assignments based on the handouts. But some students do not turn in the assignments. They give the excuse that they lost the handout.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Don't establish a routine of providing extra handouts. Make the students be responsible for the materials they were given in class. If they lose their papers, they must make their own copies from another student's notebook.

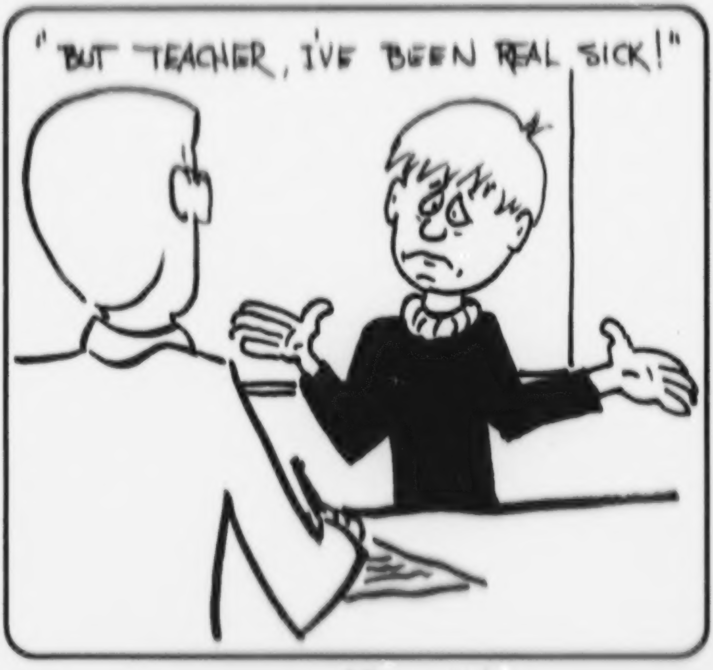
"But teacher, I've been real sick!"

THE SITUATION

A student misses six days of school in two weeks.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

The student may or may not be legitimately ill. Make a home visit to try to determine the cause of the absence. Sometimes parents believe the student is in school when he/she is actually spending the day somewhere else. The student may be having problems the parents are unaware of.


"BUT TEACHER, I'VE BEEN REAL SICK!"

"But I didn't hear the announcement!"

THE SITUATION

Sometimes students miss hearing school announcements when distracting situations arise in class.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Help the students develop the habit of listening to the school announcements. Keep the sound level in the classroom at an appropriate level. Don't make a practice of reading printed announcements later in the day. If the students know you will give the announcements later, they will simply tune out the verbal announcements when they are made.

"I guess I wasn't listening"

THE SITUATION

You have given specific directions concerning the assignment and have told students what to do with the finished work. But some of them tuned you out. When they have completed their work, they disturb those still working by asking, "Where do you want these papers put?"

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Instead of adding to the disturbance yourself by telling the student again where you want the papers put, merely point to the spot. Be sure to make eye contact as you point.

"I just forgot it"

THE SITUATION

Students take reading materials home and then forget to return them to the classroom.

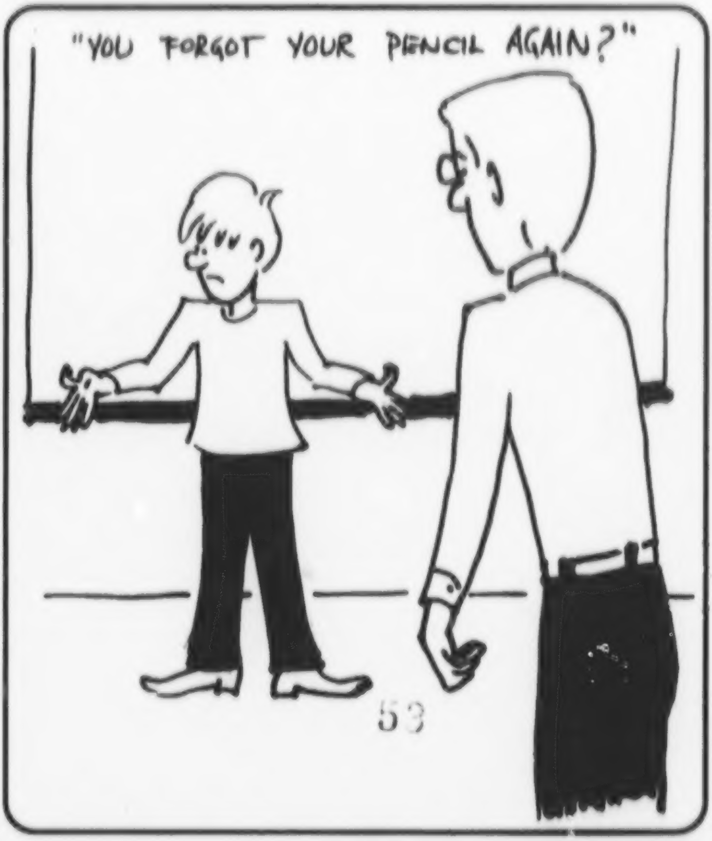
PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Set up a library system just like in the school library. Charge fines for books that are not returned on time.

"You forgot your pencil AGAIN?"

THE SITUATION

Students show up in class without their paper or pencils/pens. Should you loan them a pencil? Why can't they remember to bring a pencil or a pen? Did they really lose them? You wonder if a detention would help them remember next time.


"YOU FORGOT YOUR PENCIL AGAIN?"

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Making more rules to teach responsibility to students often causes you more problems and disturbance. Loaning and borrowing are common practices in life. But students need to take responsibility to bring their own required materials to class. You could:

- keep a supply of paper and pencils or pens in a box on the desk. Students could buy what they need at cost. — *or*
- allow students to borrow a used pen/pencil from the box and place a signed IOU in it. If no pencils remain in the box, of course none can be loaned. Chronic borrowers (from classmates or the box) who fail to replace what they borrow will soon learn their lesson.

Inform students how the plan works. Then stick with it and tolerate no excuses. No paper or pencil, no grade.

"It's due tomorrow and you don't have it done *yet?*"

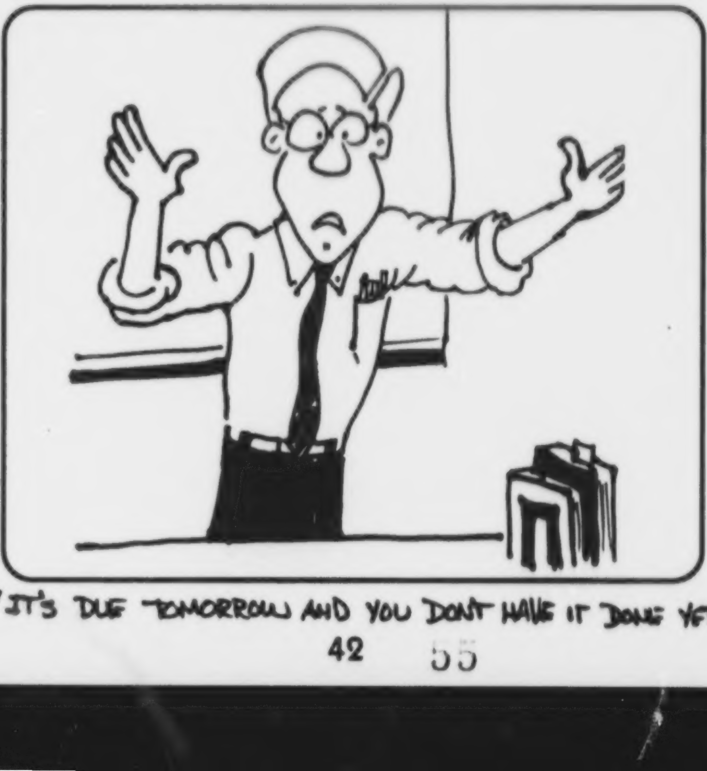
THE SITUATION

Students do not finish record books or award applications until the day before or the day of the district evaluation.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Set a deadline for completion of the books at least one week before the evaluation.

Give a semester exam grade for a completed record book.



"IT'S DUE TOMORROW AND YOU DONT HAVE IT DONE YET?"

Never a lender be

THE SITUATION

Your keys always seem to be missing.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Do not loan your keys to students if you can avoid it. If you **must**, then loan the keys to one specific student. Make that student responsible for them until they are returned to you.

No-shows

THE SITUATION

You have made the reservations and paid the money required for all the students for a special activity such as a dinner or convention. The cost for the student is covered. Then some of the students don't show up, and your money cannot be refunded.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Have students who want to go make a "good-faith" deposit. Refund it the day you go on the trip or the day after the dinner.

"I meant what I said and said what I meant"

THE SITUATION

Students often take your words literally when they can take advantage of the situation or have some fun with you. Recently, you told Matt to sit right down. He did – right on the floor where he was, in the middle of the room.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Consider carefully the words you use when you give directions, etc. For example, if you wanted Matt to sit down in his chair, say "Sit down in your assigned seat." Be alert to double meanings in what you say.

Look, but don't touch!

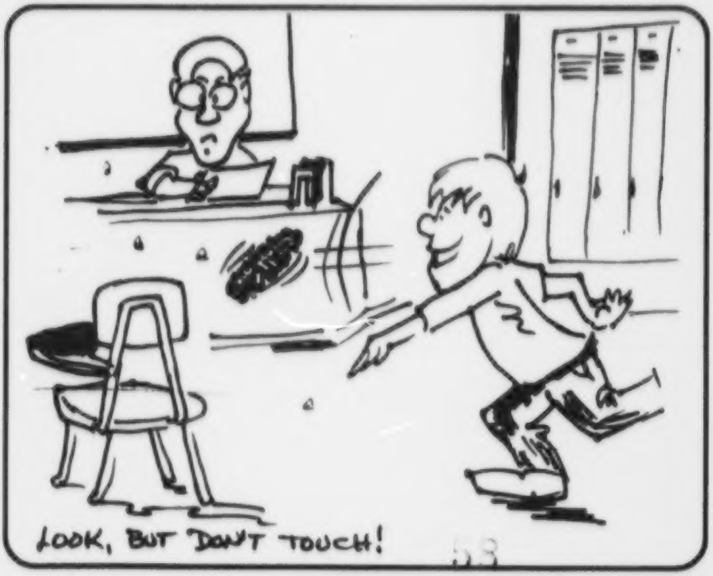
THE SITUATION

You use an object such as an ear of corn in a class demonstration. Students start breaking off kernels of corn and throwing them around the classroom.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Tell the students up front what behavior you expect of them. If you have the needed discipline and respect, you will have few such problems.

To keep childish behavior to a minimum, walk around the classroom yourself with the demonstration ear of corn. Students will not need to handle it or be tempted to break off kernels.


LOOK, BUT DON'T TOUCH!

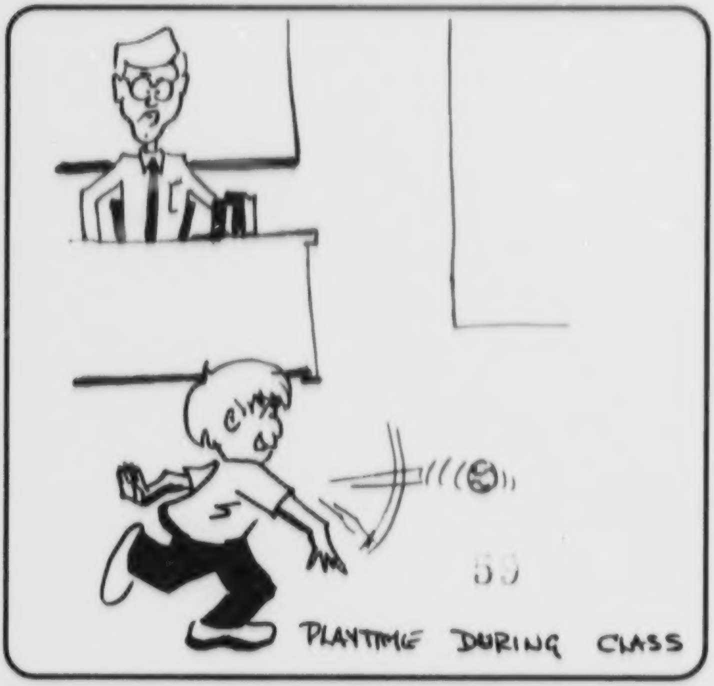
Playtime during class

THE SITUATION

Students snap rubber bands or play with other small objects during class.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Don't leave small objects where students can find them. Tell students clearly what to expect in the way of class discipline. Make sure they give you respect as their teacher. Keep them involved and interested; they will be less likely to look for distractions.



Good throwing arm!

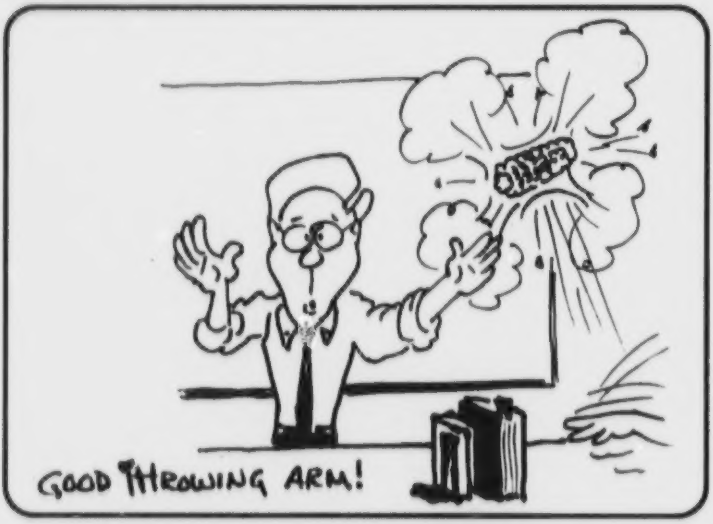
THE SITUATION

The students have some object (like that ear of corn) in their possession, distracting them. You say, "I want that ear of corn you're throwing around, up here on the desk right now!" Immediately, the corn comes flying like a missile to the front of the room.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Be prepared for a literal response. Say exactly what you mean: "Please bring the ear of corn and place it on my desk."

Make every effort to develop the students' respect for all people. Throwing an object around indicates lack of respect for you as the teacher and for the class.


GOOD THROWING ARM!

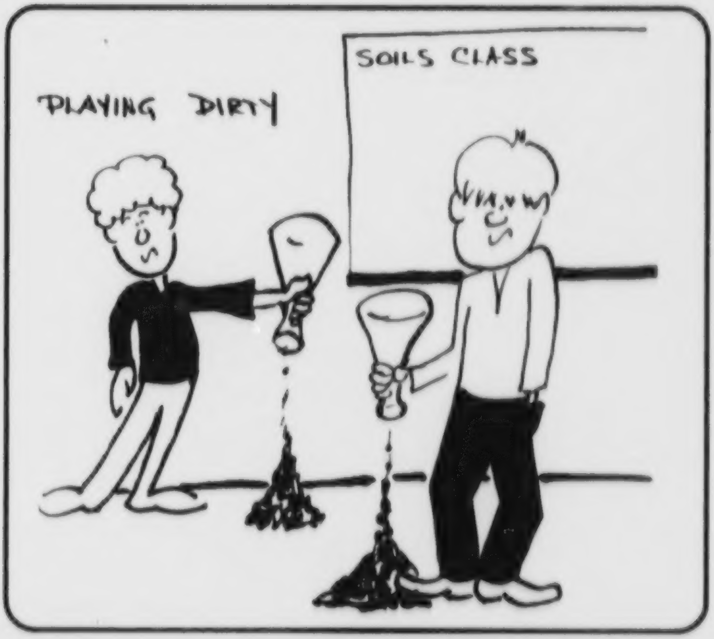
Playing dirty

THE SITUATION

You give a sample of soil to each student and tell each one to work individually testing for texture. However, they soon move into small groups. Eventually, they start throwing soil around the room.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Before you give out the individual samples, explain to all students the ground rules for the activity. Then move about the class, helping each student stay on task.



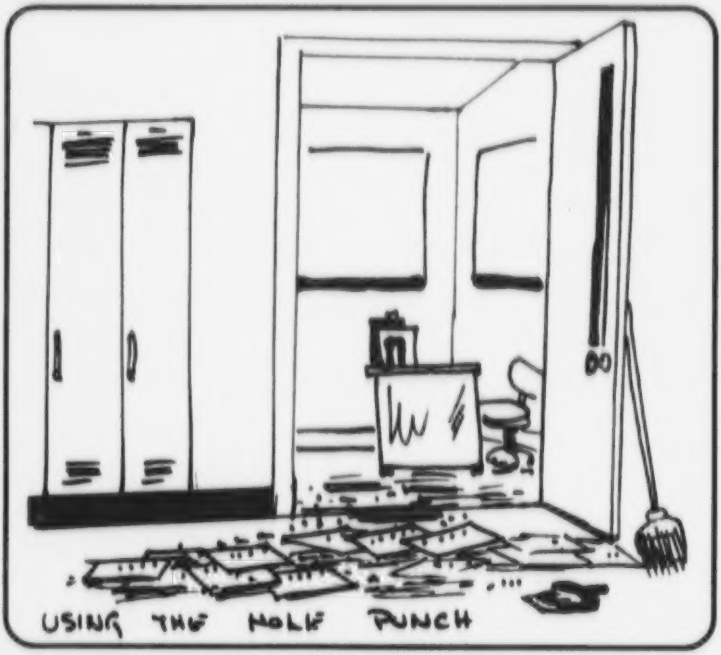
Using the hole-punch

THE SITUATION

Students make a mess in the classroom when they hole-punch their handouts. Some of the confetti ends up in study hall. Both the study hall monitor and the custodians are unhappy.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Always pre-punch all instructional materials before you distribute them. This practice saves valuable class time and prevents damaged relations with other staff members.



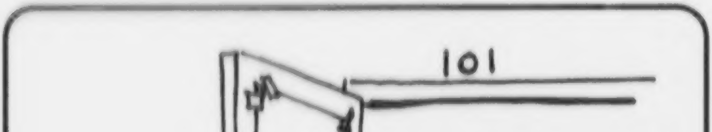
"We're outa here!"

THE SITUATION

Students have a few free moments at the end of the class period. They trash the room and then leave.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Always plan on teaching until the end of the period, allowing only enough time for cleanup. Have the students put the room in order: chairs pulled up to the table, wastepaper in the basket, books put away, etc. See that this is done before you allow any student to leave the room.


101
SEE YU!
WE'RE OUTA HERE!

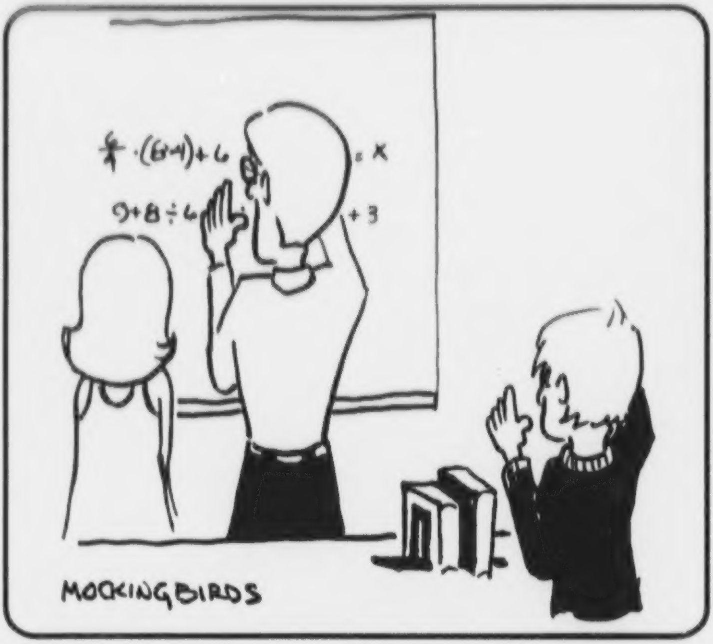
Mockingbirds

THE SITUATION

While you are giving one-on-one instruction or disciplining one student, some of the other students are imitating you, making fun of both of you.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Handle the problem students individually. Explain the effect of mocking. If it persists, make a home visit to talk with both the parents and the student. Lack of respect for the teacher (and, often, all adults) is the problem. Work to earn that respect.



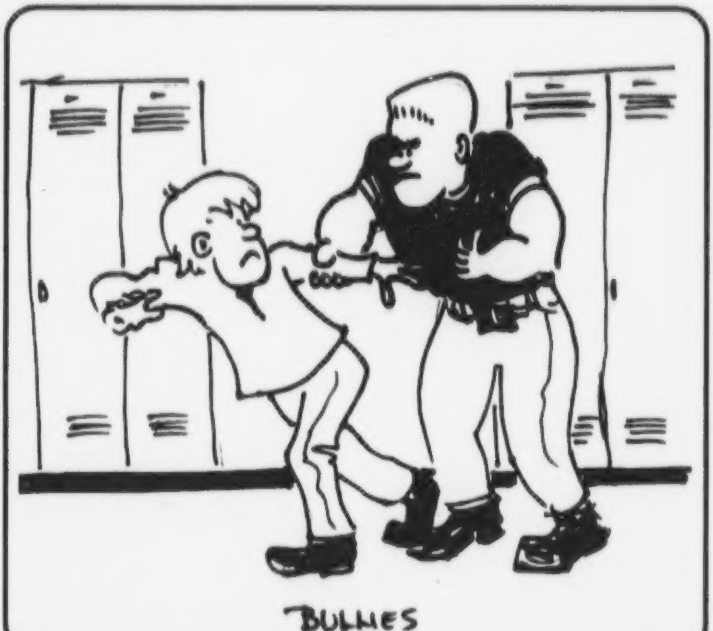
Bullies

THE SITUATION

Some of your students are harassing another student between classes.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Stand in the hall beside the classroom door where the students can see you and you can see the students as they come to class.



Shadow or real boxing?

THE SITUATION

Lennie and Jason like to "shadow box." Sometimes, however, near misses turn into hits and tempers flare. What started as a friendly little boxing match is now a full-fledged, bloody fight. Lennie is usually involved in these incidents.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

"Fun fighting" can change into real bitterness in a few seconds. Stop it as soon as it starts. Watch for this type of situation developing. When a real fight breaks out, separate the two students at once. Speak firmly and briefly, but don't take sides at this point. Don't try to reason with the fighters; it won't work. Give them time to cool down. After they have cooled down, talk with each person separately in a relaxed, friendly voice.

Lennie may use "fun fighting" to try to improve his image – so he'll look macho in the eyes of his classmates. His need to appear tough may have originated in a troubled background. Try to learn more about Lennie's situation. At the end of the class, dismiss the other students, but keep Lennie in the room. Explain to him briefly but firmly that you will not tolerate this type of behavior.

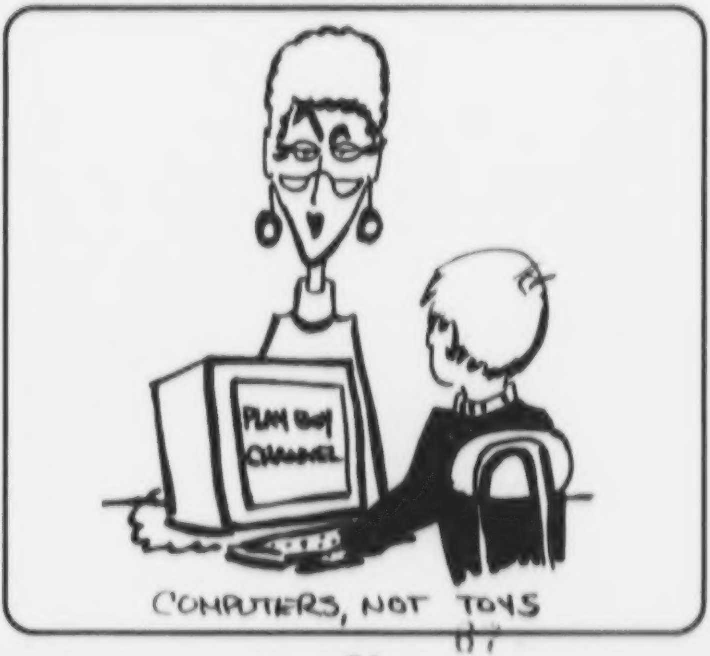
Computers, not toys

THE SITUATION

Students use the computer for unauthorized projects or activities such as dirty signs, put-downs, games, etc.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Develop respect between yourself and your students. Tell them up front what you expect of them in their use of the computer. Also, require students to turn in a handwritten draft copy of their projects before they begin work; then monitor their progress.



Respect for others' property

THE SITUATION

Certain items are missing from the department office.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Help students learn respect for the property of others, including the school's property and items that are used in their education.

Make the office off limits to students if items continue to "disappear."

Case of the missing grade book

THE SITUATION

You were using your grade book at your classroom desk. When you were distracted for a moment, the students hid the book.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Determine when you first noticed the book was missing. Question all students who were present as to the location of the grade book. If the students don't return it, when class is over, seek the help of a student who is supportive of you. Ask that student to find out, if possible, who hid the grade book and where it is.

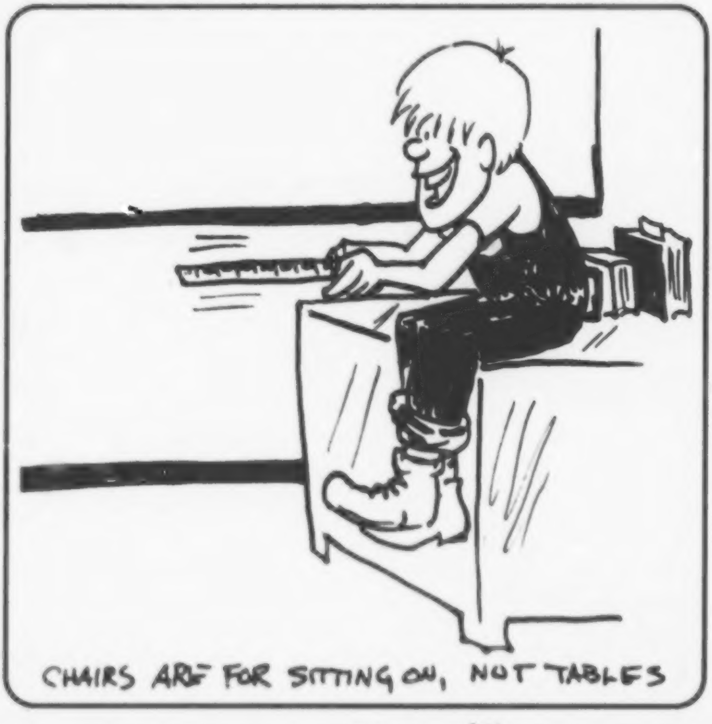
Chairs are for sitting on, not tables

THE SITUATION

Students enjoy sitting or lounging on furniture such as tables, desk tops, etc.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Don't sit on tables or desks yourself. Always set the right example for your students. Lay down the rules early on for use of the furniture; then enforce them consistently.



CHAIRS ARE FOR SITTING ON, NOT TABLES

Too many rules

THE SITUATION

Students complain that there are too many rules and regulations for the class. They pout, "We can't do *anything* around here except breathe!"

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Each year on the first day of classes, have a discussion on "Responsibilities of the Teacher" and "Responsibilities of the Student." Discuss the teacher responsibilities first. When the class has finished listing the perceived roles/responsibilities of both teacher and student, begin having the class formulate policies that will help each (teacher and students) to fulfill these roles and responsibilities. Make sure you have at least these rules for a minimum:

> "No one will prevent someone who wants to learn from learning."
>
> "No one will prevent me from teaching someone who wants to be taught."

If students help formulate the class rules/policies, they will have ownership. When there is ownership, there is obedience.

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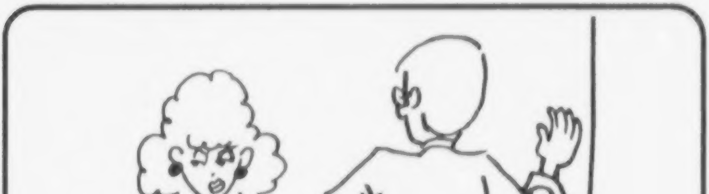
Can't wear THAT in school

THE SITUATION

According to the student handbook, the shirts and jackets worn by some of the students are illegal.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

If the offending item is a T-shirt, have the student turn it inside out and wear it. Or, to prevent having the student sent home, keep an extra clean shirt on hand for the student to wear. If it's an illegal jacket, confiscate it. Do not permit the student to wear it in school.



CAN'T WEAR THAT IN SCHOOL

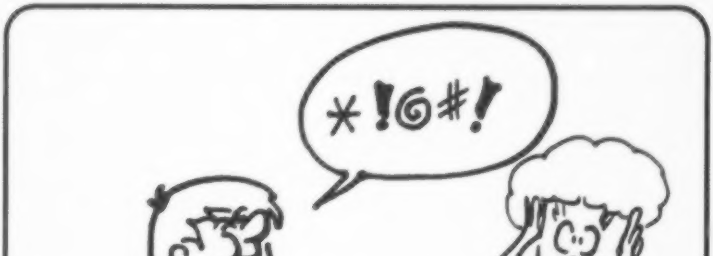
Using profanity

THE SITUATION

A student either intentionally or unintentionally uses profane language in the classroom.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Have a "cuss jar" in the room. Make the student (and the instructor!) pay a dime or a quarter each time he/she slips and swears. Also, require the student to make an apology to the class.



"OK, you're ALL going to GET it!"

THE SITUATION

You had a major disagreement today in the teachers' lounge with Ray, the science teacher. He was irate that someone had stolen his calculator from his desk. He knew the culprit had to be from the seventh period class, but no one would confess. Convinced that he had only one course of action, Ray announced that he would punish the whole class by canceling their participation in the pond ecology field trip. You challenged Ray with "What are you – a detective or a teacher?" You questioned Ray's attitude and even his image and effectiveness as a learning leader.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

An angry reaction to a theft like the missing calculator is understandable. We want to find and punish the culprit NOW. But it's better to "cool it," and in the long run we are more likely to solve the case. Remember that "Discretion is the better part of valor" and "Haste makes waste." We are teachers, not master detectives.

If you were in Ray's situation, you might try one of these strategies:

1. Be up-front with your class. Tell them about the violation of trust and that you want very much to talk to the person who stole your calculator. Explain that either the violator or the entire class

is responsible to let you know who did it. Speak to the points of courage and character. Tell them that you do not think punishing the entire class to get at the guilty one is a fair course of action. But mention that it is your responsibility to inform the administration of the situation.

2. Another strategy, which takes more time and patience, but may be effective, is to keep your eyes and ears open. Listen to the students' small talk. They are often tempted to brag over getting away with something like this. When they start talking, you'll hear about it.

Cheaters

THE SITUATION

On both quizzes and unit tests or semester exams, several students in the class try to look at their neighbor's papers to get the correct answers. Sometimes you catch them looking at a book or notes during an exam.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Toughen the consequences for cheating. If students are willing to take the punishment you have set for cheating on exams, perhaps the punishment is not severe enough. Also, you could make the students turn their desks to face a corner of the room. This position should prevent them from seeing another person's exam.

"Whadjagit?"

THE SITUATION

"Whadjagit?" is a common question you hear each time you hand back test papers. Students are curious about what grades their peers received; they want to compare. Sometimes you read them the grades of a short verbal quiz. Sometimes you have students distribute test papers while you take care of other class responsibilities.

Last week, the student who distributed the papers picked on Anthony about his poor grade on the test. Soon other students joined in with "Whadjagit, Anthony?" Yesterday, you were called to the principal's office because Anthony's mother had called to complain about her son's treatment in your class. You were asked to explain why Anthony was harassed about his grades. Why were his grades made public?, she wanted to know. She threatened to go to the school board with a complaint that you had violated a student's right to privacy.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Students' grades should be kept confidential. Many states have laws that keep the school from divulging the students' grades to certain parties without express permission. Protect yourself as a teacher. Do not divulge students' grades to unauthorized persons.

Return the students' tests face down on their desks. Then if the grade is revealed, it is the owner's doing, not yours. Write your comments on the student papers small enough that neighboring students can't read your evaluation. Also, do not post grades on a chart (as you might do for lab projects to show they are completed). Use a check mark on the chart, not a grade, to indicate that the student has completed the assigned work. Keep grading as private as possible.

Tragedy close to home

THE SITUATION

An accident or tragedy close to home has deeply affected all the students. There seems very little chance that learning will take place.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Be sensitive to the situation and the mood of your students. Talk about the situation and give any updates you know. Express concern for all those involved. Allow for some informal discussion to provide an outlet for the students' feelings.

Student helpers

THE SITUATION

You find yourself spending considerable time on routine tasks connected with your program. These tasks must be done, but you feel your time would be more productive if you used it creating better lesson plans and instructional materials.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Choose a reliable student to serve as your aide. For example, you might bring in cardboard cartons that are sectioned off. Label the sections with the names of your students. Have the student aide fill the students' sections with their graded papers, etc.

"Aren't you supposed to be in class?"

THE SITUATION

At the end of the school day, students filter into the lab or adjoining classroom and disrupt another class in session.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Before you decide upon a corrective action, check with the office to determine whether students are coming from study hall or have permission to be in the halls. The main office should handle student movement in the halls. As a last resort, you could lock the doors leading into the department.

"AREN'T YOU SUPPOSED TO BE IN CLASS?"

"What are those students doing here?"

THE SITUATION

The other teacher in the vocational program brings students who are not in the program to the classroom to help with a school-sponsored project. No work gets done. The result is one big bull session.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Voice your concern professionally rather than on a personal basis. Explain how the situation disturbs you while you are working with **your** class.

The scheduled disruption

THE SITUATION

School events such as picture day, career day, class meetings, and special group meetings disrupt the normal day's schedule.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Arrange ahead for small group activities or allow students time to catch up on projects.

If only a few students are called away from the class, avoid disruption by setting aside the regular unit lesson and teaching a "backup" lesson of special interest to your students.

"Musical chairs"

THE SITUATION

Students keep changing seating locations in the class. Also, they move chairs around so they can sit by their friends.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

During the orientation period at the beginning of the year, tell the students that for the first week of school they may sit in any table location they choose. However, on Monday of the second week of school, inform them that their permanent seating location is wherever they are now seated around the tables. These will remain their seats until a change is negotiated.

On Monday of the second week, be sure to have the tables and chairs aligned as you want them. Emphasize that this will be the layout of the room. Inform the students that you as the teacher will make any decisions regarding relocation of the chairs and tables.

"You didn't tell us!"

THE SITUATION

Students complain that they were not forewarned about something, like the date a homework assignment was due, the date of a certain quiz, or when the field trip permission slips had to be turned in. Since they didn't know/remember (they complain), they should not be held accountable for the work.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Reserve a portion of the chalkboard for class assignments. Regularly post due dates and assignments there. Remind students repeatedly to check that area for important information.

Slower than molasses in January

THE SITUATION

When you say "Put this in your notes," students take five minutes to get their notebooks out of their lockers and get them open on their desks.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Don't let this happen! You have not trained your students adequately. Tell them they are expected to get their notebooks as soon as they arrive in the classroom. Don't begin the class until all students have their notebooks open in front of them.

It's not over till the bell rings

THE SITUATION

There are about three minutes left before the end-of-period bell rings. You are still talking, but the students close their notebooks and begin to put them away.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Give an open-notebook quiz after several students have returned their notebooks to the storage area.

"No questions? I guess you already know everything!"

THE SITUATION

You have a guest speaker come to your class. The students fail to ask the speaker any questions at the end of the presentation.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

In the class period before the speaker comes, have the students prepare a list of questions to ask him/her. Have the questions in hand the day of the presentation.

Bored to death

THE SITUATION

Students become disruptive and noisy in class when they have little or nothing to do.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Be sure to prepare weekly lesson plans in advance. If you find yourself covering some material faster than you had anticipated, consult the weekly plan and move on to the next part of the plan without any "down time." If you have well-organized lesson plans, you can avoid most classroom management problems.

The indifferent student

THE SITUATION

The student is indifferent to the information in the lesson. The student fails to "personalize" what you are teaching.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Make clear to the students what value the lesson has for them personally. Help them gain student ownership of the lesson at the beginning of the lesson with an "interest approach."

Helping students take notes

THE SITUATION

Certain students do not take notes in your class.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Don't assume that students know how to take notes. At the beginning of the school year, include instruction in how to take notes and how to use them later. Include a notebook grade as part of the total course grade. Also, give open-book tests for which students must use only their own notes.

"You all know what a _____ is"

THE SITUATION

Some students have a limited vocabulary. They do not understand the meaning of key terms in the lesson.

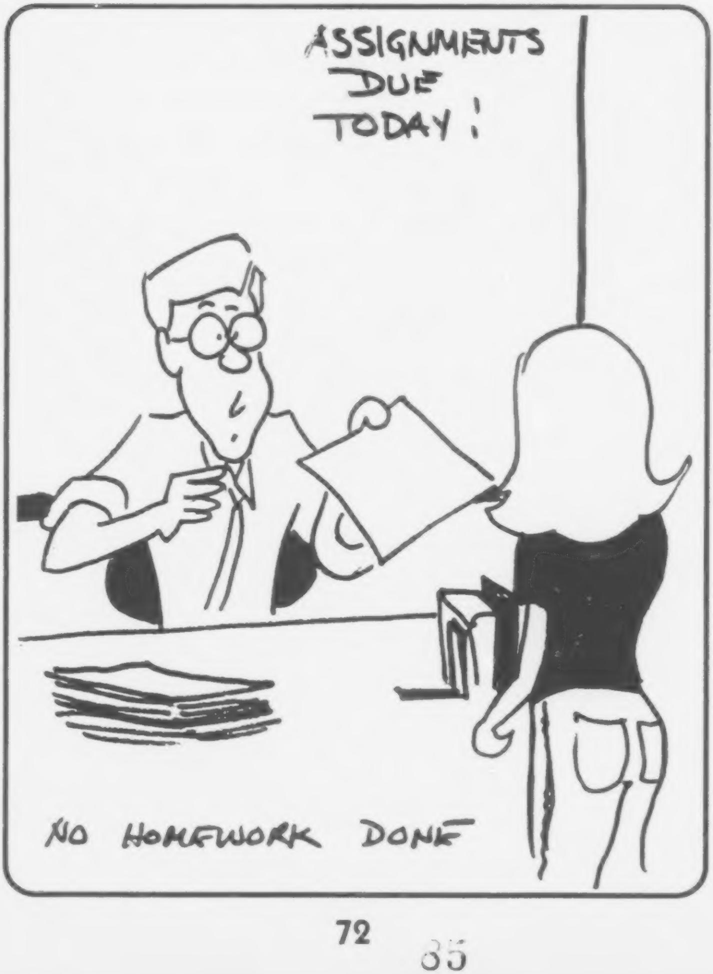
PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Never assume that students know the definition of key terms. Make it standard practice to check students' understanding of key terms. If necessary, take time to teach them the meaning.

No homework done

THE SITUATION

Some students invariably fail to do their homework assignment. They think they can pass the course by taking only the tests.


ASSIGNMENTS
DUE
TODAY!
NO HOMEWORK DONE

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

1. Make it clear to students that they earn the right to take tests by doing their assignments regularly.
2. Make sure students understand the assigned homework. Explain a sample question the day before you assign it. Check closely to see whether students can read the assignment with understanding. If they "don't get it," they can't do it.
3. Tell students that no assignments turned in means no test can be taken.

"Sounds like a herd of elephants!"

THE SITUATION

On Fridays your vocational class is scheduled to use the computer room. Instead of the usual two periods in your related class, they go to the computer room during the second period. The director complains that she can always tell when it is fourth period on Fridays because your group talks so loudly on their way to the lab.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Have you tried the *Readiness for Reaction* principle (page 7)? Take the students mentally through the sequence of actions – from classroom to computer lab. For the students, knowing what to expect and what you expect of them will usually prevent undesirable behavior.

Sometimes there is loud talking because the students are spread out in line in the halls. They raise their voices so they will be heard by their friends ahead of (or behind) them. Remedy: Choose two of the more trustworthy students to lead the group at a comfortable pace. You bring up the rear to prevent straggling.

Keeping the flock together

THE SITUATION

The class is to go down the hall to another room. Students walk slowly towards that destination and then disappear.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Bring up the rear. Follow the last person down the hall so you can see everyone and make sure they get to the intended destination.

Class A = class B; no reruns

THE SITUATION

You teach two sections of the same lesson. Sometimes you leave the notes from the first class session on the chalkboard. Students in the next class read them and get ahead of your lecture or discussion.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Erase the notes from the first class, even though leaving them for the next class section would save you time. Starting each class with a clean chalkboard is important in enabling you to develop the lesson to fit that class's needs. You will then be able to keep all students together in note-taking.

"Don't run ahead!"

THE SITUATION

Your class activity requires the students to use a skill sheet. Before you explain the skill sheet and the directions it contains, students begin the activity.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Give as many directions as possible before you distribute the skill sheets and the materials. First help the students study the skill sheet. Then distribute the work materials.

"I want to see all your calculations"

THE SITUATION

Students do not show their work on the math test items. So you cannot determine if the students understand the mechanics of the problems.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

In the written directions for the test, include the requirement for students to show all their math calculations. Also give them a verbal reminder before they begin the test. Consider giving partial credit if the test items do not include **all** calculations.

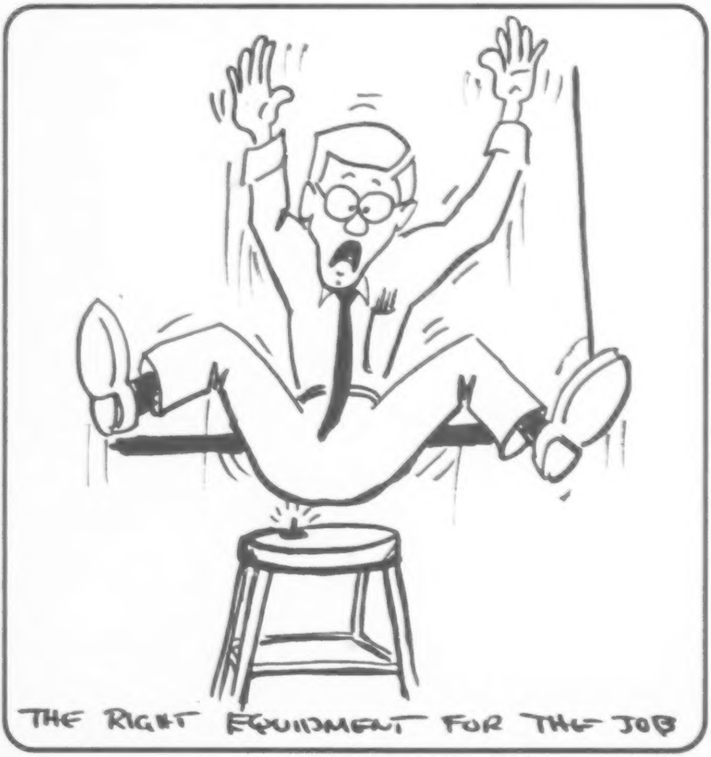
The right equipment for the job

THE SITUATION

You usually use thumbtacks or pushpins to fasten an item on the bulletin board. The tacks and pins have a tendency to show up next point-up on your chair and others'.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Avoid the sharp items altogether. Use staples or tape to fasten items on bulletin boards or walls.


THE RIGHT EQUIPMENT FOR THE JOB

Get to class before the students

THE SITUATION

Your students arrived at the unattended classroom just minutes before you did. They wasted no time getting into trouble. You have a "situation" to deal with first thing.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Leave home earlier; get there FIRST! Greet students by name at the door every morning and at every class session. This allows you to be proactive rather than reactive.

"I'll have it fixed in a second"

THE SITUATION

You are setting up an AV presentation or doing trouble-shooting during class time. Students take advantage of this "down time," talking loudly and moving about the classroom "looking for trouble."

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Always preview VHS tapes and films to make sure that the equipment and films or tapes are ready to go.

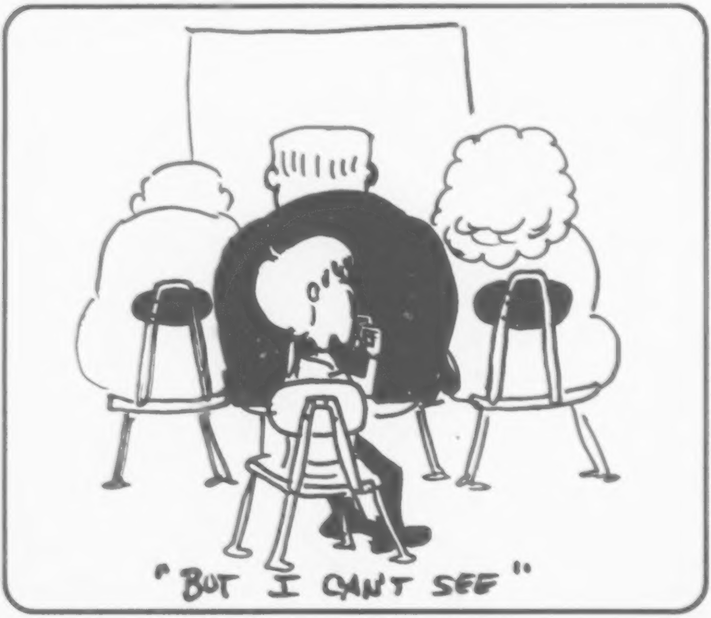
"But I can't see!"

THE SITUATION

Before showing a movie, video, or slides, you ask the class if everyone can see all right. Many say they can't, so you spend more than five minutes readjusting the projector, moving chairs around, trying to make everyone happy.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Do not ask if everyone can see. Adjust seating beforehand. Then move around the room, using your own judgment as to visibility. Students who really want to see will find a way.



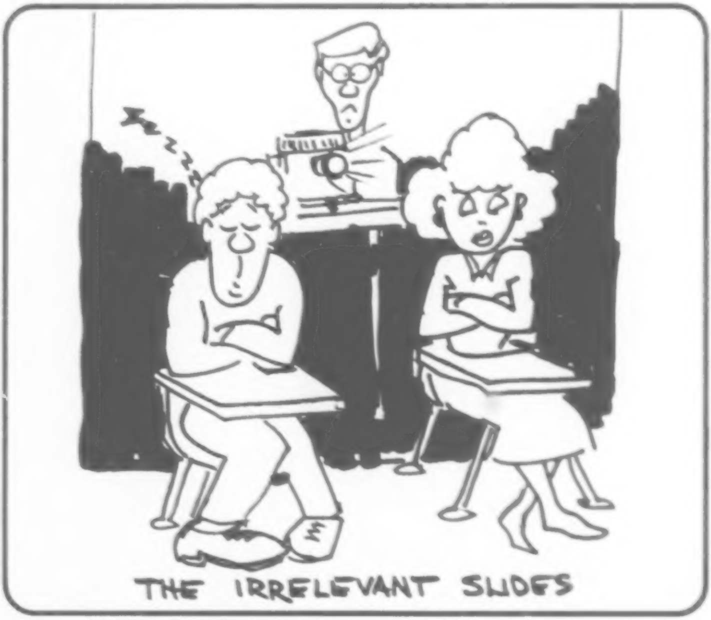
The irrelevant slides

THE SITUATION

You bought a slide series for a particular lesson. The series contains unimportant or irrelevant frames that don't apply to the lesson topic. You show them anyway, but begin to "lose" the students during the slide showing.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Always review an unfamiliar slide set thoroughly before you show it to the class. Take out all unnecessary slides that would contribute to loss of the students' attention.



Slide confusion

THE SITUATION

When you are ready to show slides to your class, you find that students have advanced or mixed up the slides and removed some from the tray.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Keep the slide advancer in your possession. Also, don't leave the slide carousel out on the table when you are not using it.

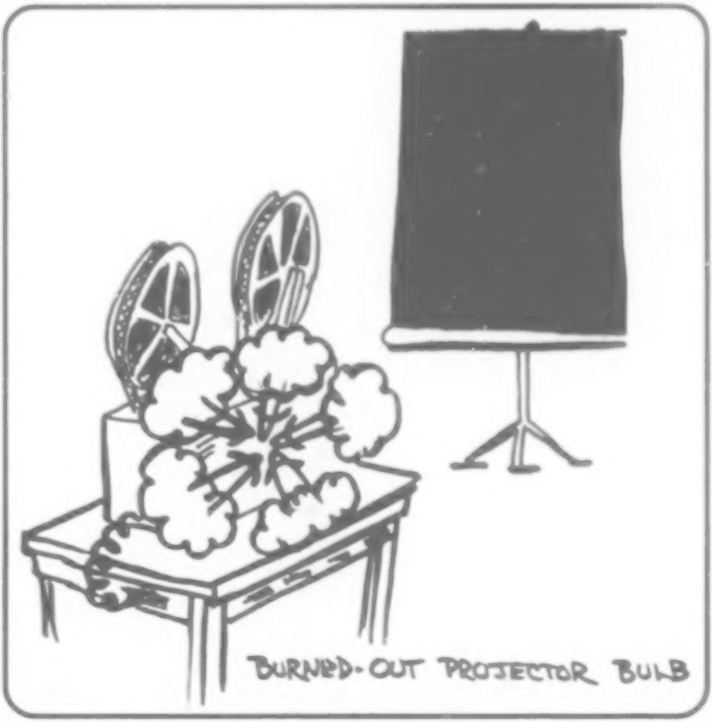
Burned-out projector bulb

THE SITUATION

The projector bulb burns out right in the middle of a lesson.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Always keep spare projector bulbs on hand. Keep them in a specific location known to all teachers and certain trusted students so that you can quickly make the replacement when a bulb burns out.



Playing games in class

THE SITUATION

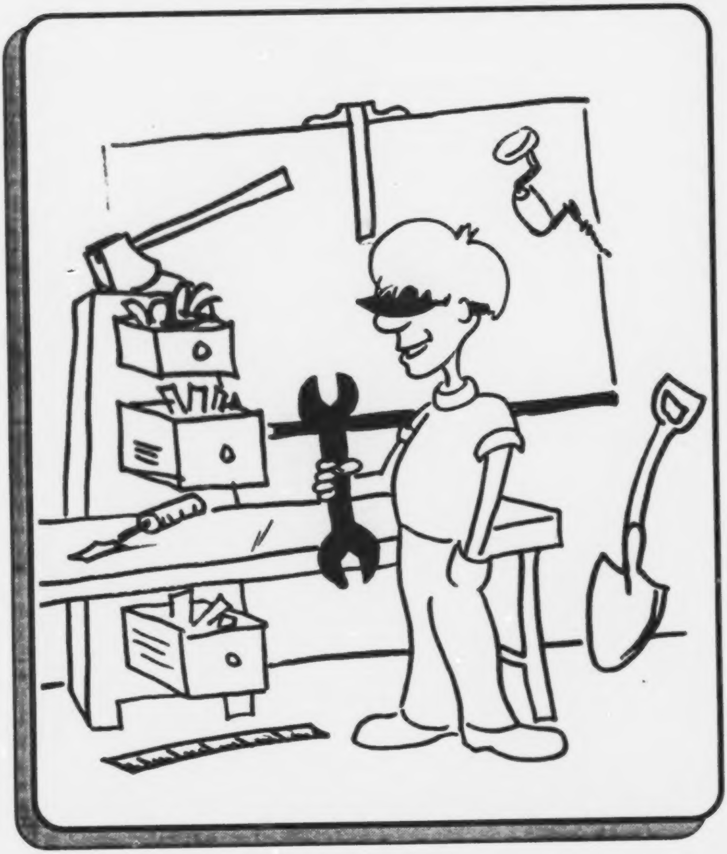
Every teacher has those days when he/she doesn't feel like planning or teaching. Occasionally, there are also days when the prepared lesson is over before the class period is. And, finally, there are days when we are sure the students are bored with the class. "What's the use of trying to teach today?" we ask. So we use the time for working puzzles, drawing pictures, playing video games (aren't they math- and communication skill-based?), or doing other "entertaining" activities.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Let's not kid ourselves that playing games is education. Rarely it is, but usually playing games is pure entertainment. What we are really doing is "killing time." Research has shown that teachers play games because they don't want to spend the time necessary to make the classwork as interesting or challenging as the games. Padding lessons with games tells the students a lot about us: that we don't care about learning, or we too are bored, or we are lazy.

The most respected teachers in school are those who have a teaching plan with a definite learning purpose, not those who permit the students to play games. If games are used, they should be part of the lesson – the most effective strategy to achieve a learning point. Most game-playing is the "lesson plan" for the unprepared teacher.

In the Lab



"WHEN are we going to the lab?"

THE SITUATION

Several days ago, you gave your students an approximate date on which they could begin working in the lab. However, the present lesson is not moving along as you had anticipated. The students are upset because you will not let them go to the lab until the present lesson is completed.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Avoid giving the students an exact date when lab activities will begin. Make it clear that they will go to the lab only when the present lesson is completed. Tell them that their attention and cooperation will speed up the process.

"The Gang" in the lab

THE SITUATION

Students are going to the lab in groups made up of their friends. Trouble is brewing between groups.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Assign all students to preset groups before going to the lab.

Keeping track

THE SITUATION

Several students are out of the lab at the same time. One of them causes a problem (such as smoking, parking lot incident, etc.), but you don't know who.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Keep a sign-out sheet in the lab. Make the students, one at a time, write down their time leaving and time returning. Emphasize that they will need a pass.

All the time in the world

THE SITUATION

When students are given a job, they take too much time to complete it. A simple task like taking trash out to the dumpster is drawn out too long.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Make sure each student understands the job that is to be done. Give a reasonable amount of time to complete it. Ask the student to estimate how much time the job will take. Don't tolerate loitering.

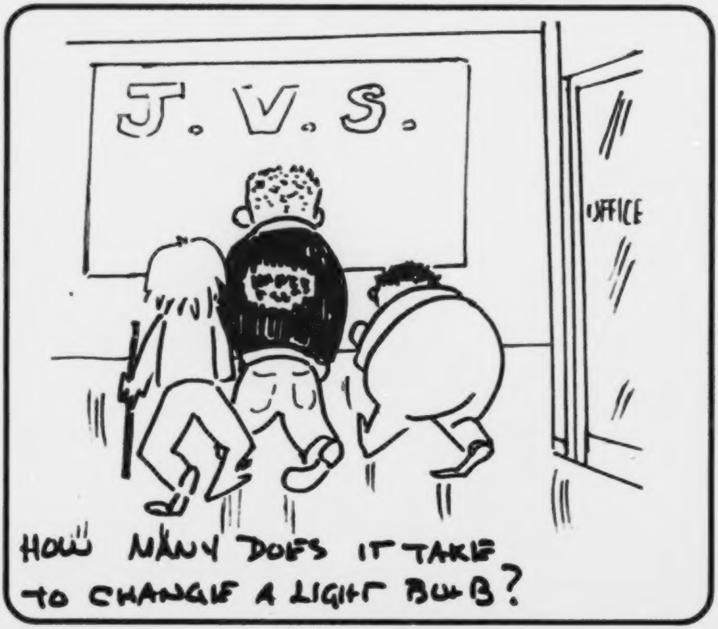
How many does it take to change a light bulb?

THE SITUATION

A small item that can easily be carried by one student is to be taken to another part of the school. Several students "con" you (the new teacher) into allowing them to "help" with this item. This group takes their time, behaves poorly, and disrupts other classes en route.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Observe a simple precaution: Assign only the **needed** number of students to get the job done, no extras.


J. V. S.
OFFICE
HOW MANY DOES IT TAKE TO CHANGE A LIGHT BULB?

"When ya gotta go, ya gotta go!"

THE SITUATION

Some students leave the lab without your permission to go to the restroom. Usually they want to go because a friend has just left the lab.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Establish the policy at the beginning of the school year that only one student at a time uses the restroom. Require students to carry a pass (large, visible sign, or board with key ring attached). Be consistent in enforcing the policy.

The wanderers

THE SITUATION

Some students wander around the lab and disturb other students.

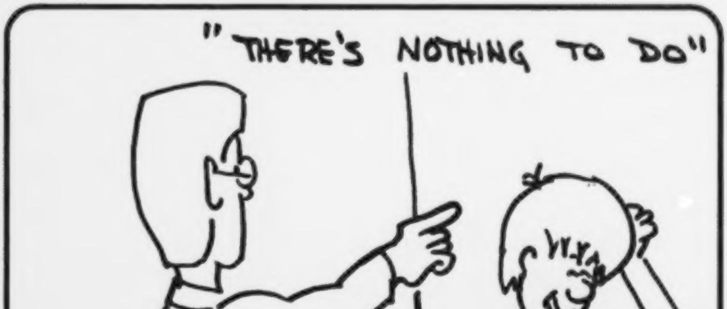
PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Ask each student at the start of each lab period what tasks he/she needs to accomplish that day. This will help you determine whether a student needs more work to do.

"There's nothing to do"

THE SITUATION

Some of the students seem to be busy doing nothing. They become loud and disruptive while the other students are working. Upon checking, you discover that they completed their lab assignments several minutes ago. They say there isn't enough time in the period to begin work on the next big project.



PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Students need to be occupied productively at all times in class or lab. Plan your lesson strategies to have all students involved at all times in activities pertaining to the lesson. Have ready several meaningful lab activities of **short duration** to fill the time. But, at the same time, avoid "busy work" - tasks that are irrelevant to the subject area.

Out of sight

THE SITUATION

Students gather in a "blind spot" in the lab when you are giving your attention to a distant area of the lab.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Eliminate blind spots in the lab, if possible. If it's not possible due to building design, arrange the equipment so as to obtain a clearer view of these areas, even to installing mirrors. Make frequent checks in these areas.

Diversionary tactics

THE SITUATION

Some students create "decoy" situations in the lab. They try to get your attention concentrated on something else so you won't know what's going on. Then they carry on their own prohibited or destructive activities.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Beware of "Teacher, you've got to come **right away**!" Unless it's clearly an emergency, delay your response slightly, not interrupting your activity right away. Maintain your advantage. Keep a frequent count of visible students. Be alert to a sudden drop in number. Trouble could be brewing.

Horsing around

THE SITUATION

There is too much "horseplay" going on at the end of the lab session.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Make sure each student has a task to perform in the lab. Your responsibility is to keep each student on task. Leave only minimal time for lab clean-up. When there is too much time, horseplay is the result.

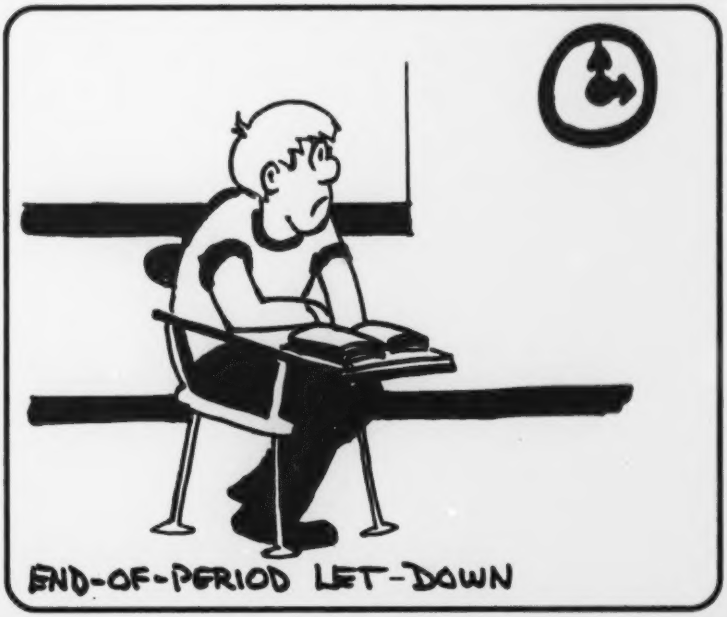
End-of-period let-down

THE SITUATION

The momentum of your class seems to be OK most of the time. But student attention seems to fade near the end of the class period.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Keep the momentum of class activities going right up until the last two or three minutes of the period. Then do a quick review of the material studied in class. Give the students hints about their homework; that should get their attention. Maintain a sense of excitement about what they are learning.



Smokers & chewers beware!

THE SITUATION

Some of your students smoke in the lab. Others use snuff or chewing tobacco. These students ask to be assigned to lab areas such as the seed-flat planting area in the greenhouse or the welding area so they can smoke or chew without detection.

SMOKERS & CHEWERS BEWARE!

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

1. At the beginning of the school year, inform all students as to the school policy regarding use of tobacco in any form.
2. Keep close monitoring of all student activity in the lab. Get to know your students well enough to know their habits. Keep the smokers and chewers under closer surveillance than the other students when you make assignments to different lab areas.
3. Follow school policies without hesitation if you find a student using tobacco.

Missing in action

THE SITUATION

During lab clean-up, some students wander in and out of the lab.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Tell the students that no one leaves the lab until all clean-up jobs are completed. Have the student foreman help you keep everyone on task. Stand near the lab door, if necessary, to prevent students from leaving.

An ounce of prevention

THE SITUATION

As a new teacher, you are concerned about possible discipline problems. You want to do all you can to prevent their happening.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

An effective "ounce of prevention" is to meet the parents of your students before the start of school. When problems do occur later, you will find it easier to request the family's help in solving them.

Mixed-up communications

THE SITUATION

Several students in the lab are asking you questions at the same time. You look at one student as you answer her question. But another student thinks you are answering his question and does something you didn't want him to do.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Say the student's name first before you give an answer to his/her question. Then ask the student to repeat your directions.

"I didn't get a turn!"

THE SITUATION

You gave a multi-student assignment, then ran out of time before all the students got to do the hands-on activity.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Plan your lab assignments more carefully. Make sure you leave adequate time for every student to do what you assigned. Make accountability a criterion for every lab assignment.

"Don't rush me"

THE SITUATION

You are hurrying to evaluate the lab projects and give each one a grade to keep the students happy. But by the end of the lab, you can't remember what scores you gave to all the projects.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Don't let yourself be rushed by impatient students. Don't trust your memory. Record the project grades immediately in the grade book. Or record them on a blank sheet of paper and transfer them later into the grade book. If the students "can't wait," have them sign up on a list and "take a number." This will establish the order in which you grade them.

Unpaid bills

THE SITUATION

You foot the bill up front for the students' lab projects. You expect the students to pay you when they have completed their projects. You let the students take them home. Some of the students don't bother to pay their bill; others even quit school.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Do not let any students take their projects home before they have paid you for the materials used. If a project involves a lot of money, have the student bring in his/her own materials. Or have the student make payments to cover costs before starting the project.

The substitute

THE SITUATION

Your substitute is taking attendance and can't locate some of the students.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Use a seating chart and keep it current as students enter or leave the program.

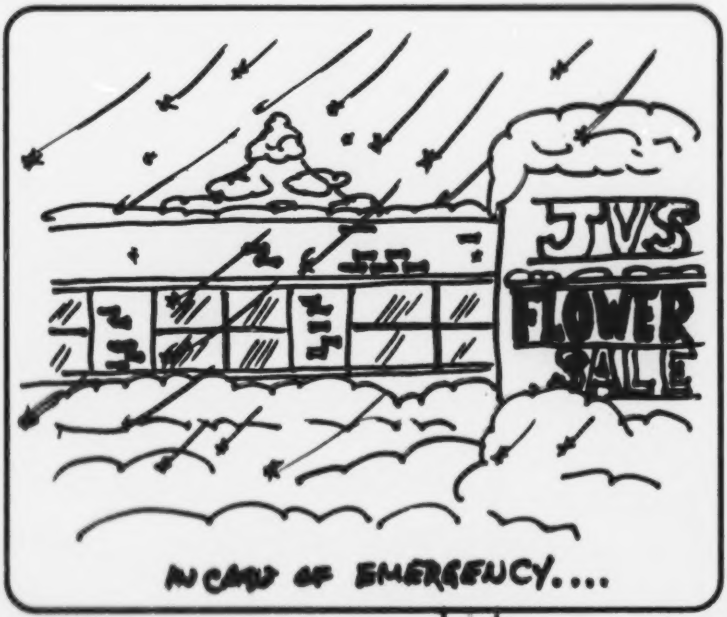
In case of emergency . . .

THE SITUATION

The flower shop orders are in your lab, ready to be picked up on Friday. Suddenly there is a weather emergency and school is canceled.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Have a contingency plan for that eventuality: cancellation of school due to bad weather conditions. Plan ahead so customers can count on the order being done. If necessary, call the customers and make arrangements with them for pickup.



"Where are your safety glasses/ lab clothes?"

THE SITUATION

Some of your students forget to bring their safety glasses and protective clothing to lab.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Arrange for your students to buy their own safety glasses and protective clothing at the beginning of the school year. Make it their responsibility to keep these items in their personal lockers in the lab. Have extra sets of protective clothing available when the students are buying theirs. Some will want to have two sets: while one is being washed, the other is in the locker, ready to wear.

Good enough

THE SITUATION

The lab projects (whether wood, metal, or floral) are of poor quality.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Instruct students before they begin their projects as to the level of performance expected of them. Show them examples of projects with the desired quality of workmanship.

Supervise the students' work closely. Do not accept poor workmanship.

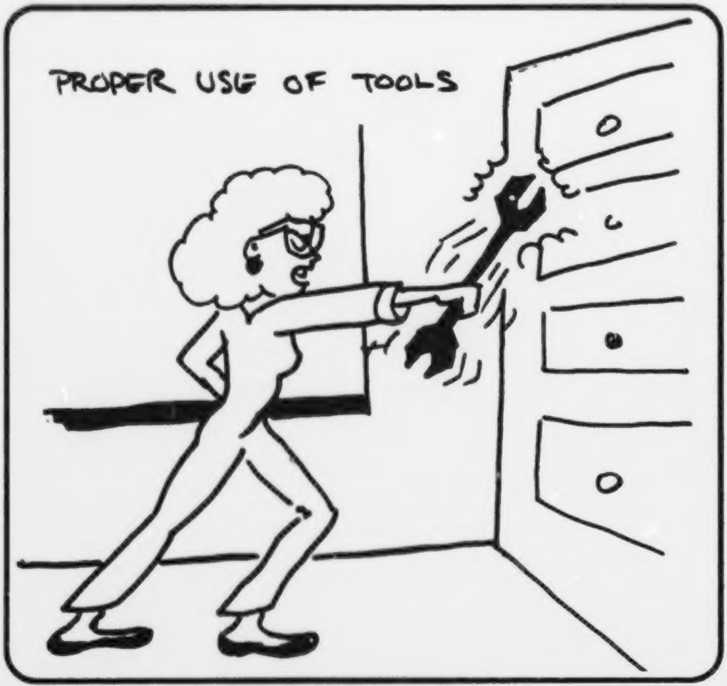
Proper use of tools

THE SITUATION

Students use tools for other than their intended purpose. For example, they may pound with wrenches, etc.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Give the students instruction/demonstration in proper use of the tools. Have each student check out tools needed for his/her own use. Emphasize that he/she is responsible for how those tools are used.



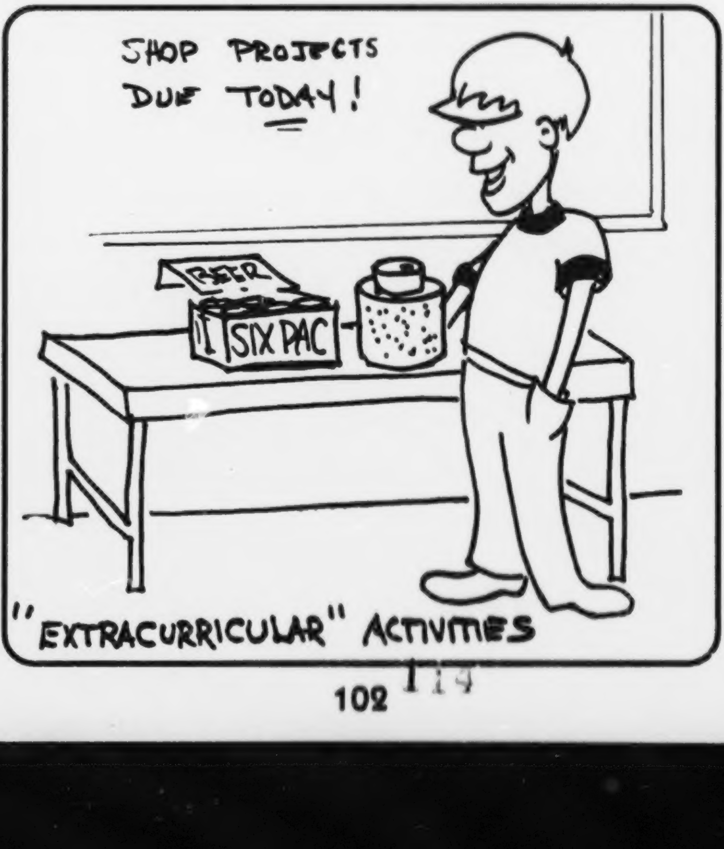
"Extracurricular" activities

THE SITUATION

Students make extra, unacceptable items in lab such as ash trays and beer-can holders. They use consumable supplies for their personal use.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Instruct students at the beginning of the school year as to what projects are appropriate. Make effective scheduling of tasks and monitor student projects closely. This should help prevent unapproved and inappropriate projects and use of supplies.


SHOP PROJECTS
DUE TODAY!
BEER
SIX PAC
"EXTRACURRICULAR" ACTIVITIES

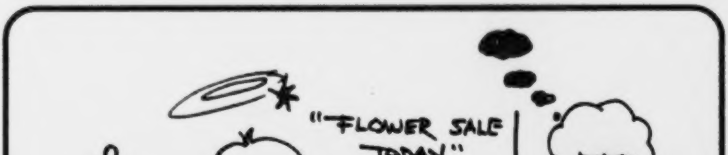
The unhappy customer

THE SITUATION

Students have worked on a project for a certain customer. When the customer comes to pick up the item, he/she finds the quality of work unsatisfactory. (With a tractor or lawn mower, the engine won't start. With a flower arrangement, the colors are not as ordered, etc.)

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

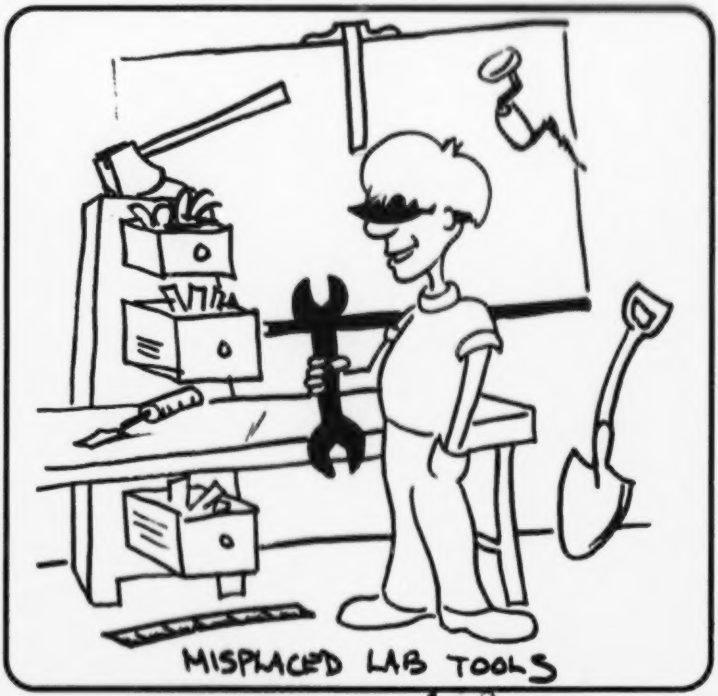
Take time to check each project before the customer is notified for pickup. Then if there's anything wrong, any needed alterations or extra work can be done without making the program look bad.



Misplaced lab tools

THE SITUATION

Lab tools are frequently missing. Sometimes they turn up with the consumable supplies; sometimes they are lost permanently. A possible cause of lost tools: students, working on their individual lab projects, leave the tools lying around when they leave the lab. Another class enters and those students either play with the tools or use them to damage the projects. Also, younger students of yours are quite casual about putting tools away. They don't think it's important.



PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Tell the students that all the tools must be in place for the next class. Make sure the students know that each of them is responsible for the condition and location of the tools.

Paint a silhouette of each tool on the storage board so you can take a quick inventory of the tools.

Establish a tool check-out system so you can determine which student is responsible for a missing tool. Charge that student for it.

Who stole the tools?

THE SITUATION

Tools have been stolen from the lab. No one seems to know anything about the situation.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Shut down the lab and take the students to the related classroom, if possible. Have each student write down what he/she is aware of; then talk to each one individually. You will probably be able to pick up some clues as to possible guilty parties. Then you and the supervisor can proceed more efficiently to find the person or persons responsible for the theft.

Missing keys

THE SITUATION

Early in the day you gave your keys to a student to open a locked cabinet. Now it is the end of the day and everyone is gone. You discover that the student did not return your keys to your desk. Like the student, your keys are now probably miles away. You have at least two problems: 1) You cannot lock up or secure the area. 2) Your car keys are on the same missing ring, so you have to walk home.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Always keep your car keys on a separate ring from the school keys. Make sure the cabinet, door, and other school keys are on a large ring or board so they are less likely to be lost or carried off.

Theft of safety glasses

THE SITUATION

You discover that, just as in previous years, safety glasses are routinely stolen from your lab.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Code each pair of glasses with a number, using an electric pencil or permanent marker. Assign a pair of glasses to each student and use the same number for that student in your grade book. Emphasize that each student is responsible to keep his/her numbered glasses locked in his/her own locker when not in use. Link loss of glasses to lowering of final grade.

What a waste!

THE SITUATION

Some students are wasting consumable supplies in the lab such as sandpaper, glue, and wood.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Before your students begin their lab assignments, hand out the materials each one will need for the assigned task. Don't permit students free access to supplies. Demonstrate how to use supplies efficiently and conservatively. Students who have to **ask** you for more items (welding rods, for example) will be more likely to conserve and use them wisely.

Messing around with the model

THE SITUATION

You have demonstration models of tools and equipment (such as a one-cylinder engine) in your lab. Students have dismantled one such model without your permission and have lost some of the small parts. When you need the model in your lesson, it is not usable.

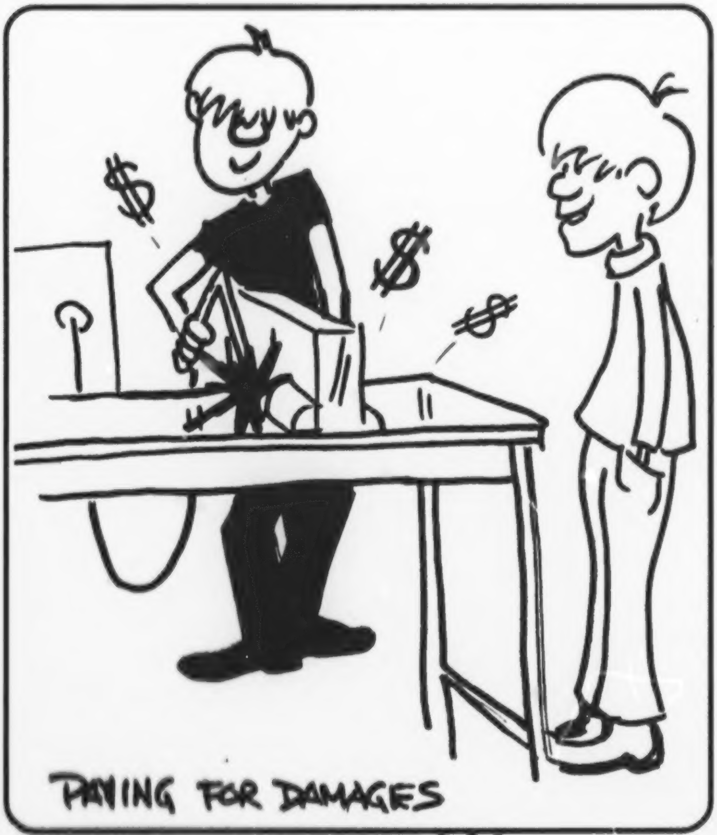
PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Keep all instructional models, such as one-cylinder engines and electrical appliances, in safe storage away from normal student traffic. Don't allow unsupervised use of these models.

Paying for damages

THE SITUATION

Occasionally, one student or several students will deliberately damage the lab equipment. Today they welded a piece of metal to the welding table "for fun."



PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Give your students instruction at the beginning of the school year concerning personal safety and safe use of tools and equipment. Explain that they are responsible for preventing damage to equipment. Make it very clear that if they intentionally damage equipment, they will pay for it. Remember that as their supervisor, you must check on the students' activities regularly throughout the day to see how "creative" their welding projects are.

"NOW what?"

THE SITUATION

Every day in lab you find that something unexpected happens: a project is damaged, there is an accident involving equipment or a student, tools are ruined, etc.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Always be on the lookout for what **could** happen in various situations. For example, a student will be working on a tractor in your lab. What could happen if he/she doesn't use a jack stand? Uses a wrong tool? Makes the wrong repairs? Go over possible problem areas in advance of the class or lab so you can anticipate what might happen.

Sharing the lab with others

THE SITUATION

You have to share the lab tools with other staff. Custodians use the lab tools and equipment and then often leave without cleaning up. Yesterday, one of them dulled a saw blade you had just replaced in preparation for a lab demonstration today. At other times, a needed tool is missing.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Have a private conversation with the custodian. Explain the impact his/her use of the lab has on your effectiveness as a teacher and on student use of the lab. Emphasize that you and your students have priority. If the problem persists, discuss it with your supervisor. You may have to replace the locks on your storage areas and give the one extra key to your supervisor.

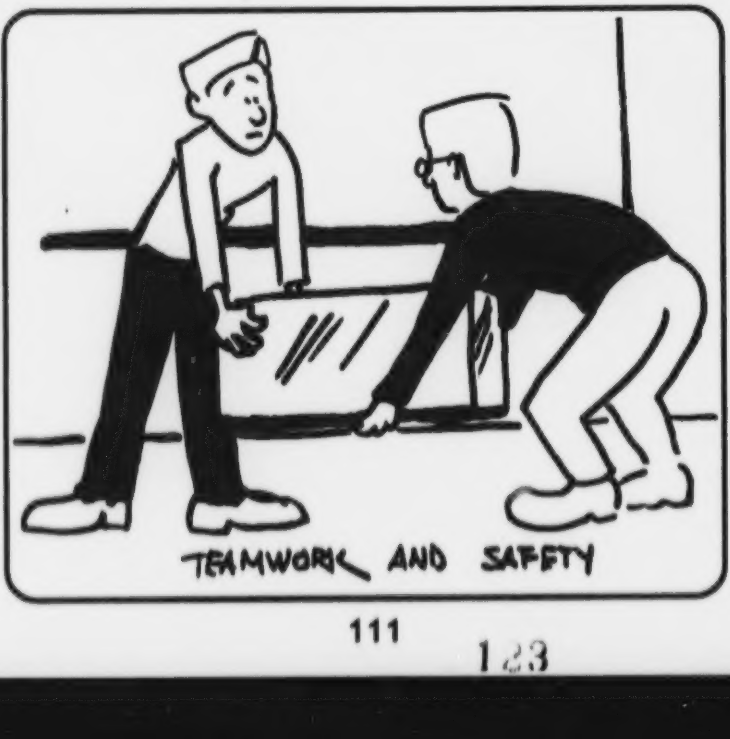
Teamwork and safety

THE SITUATION

There is a heavy object in the lab that needs to be moved. Several students try to lift the object, but it slips and injures someone's foot. The object is also damaged in the fall.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Make sure you have instructed students in the proper techniques to use to lift heavy objects. Coordinate the action of all participants before they attempt to lift the object.



"How many times have I told you: Put your safety glasses on!"

THE SITUATION

You have to remind some students repeatedly to put on their safety glasses. Other students refuse to wear safety glasses at all in the lab.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Give instruction at the beginning of the school year in safety practices the students must use while in the lab. Reinforce these safety practices constantly throughout the year. If reinforcement techniques don't work, lower the student's grade after the first few offenses. Finally, suspend the student from the lab if he/she refuses to cooperate. Remember, an injury to a student could mean a law suit against you.

"This lab is a pig pen!"

THE SITUATION

Because of horseplay or carelessness, students make a mess in the lab with oil and other supplies. Clean-up is not done as it must be for cleanliness and safety. The principal has called this to your attention.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

1. Have students check out oil cans and similar supplies just as they would check out a tool. Limit such supplies.
2. Design and implement a structured lab clean-up system. Divide the lab into specific areas for clean-up. Assign students to clean these areas on a rotational basis.

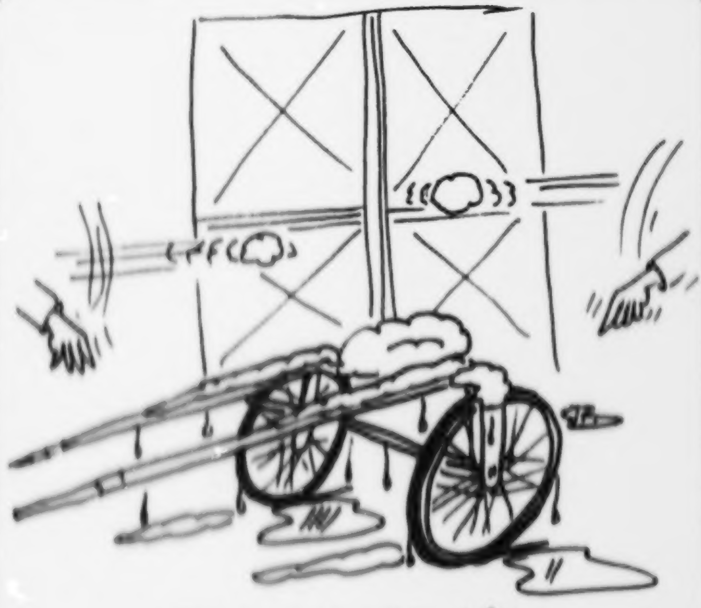
Snow in the lab

THE SITUATION

A student brings into the lab a large piece of equipment covered with snow. Before you know it, the whole class is throwing snow around the lab.

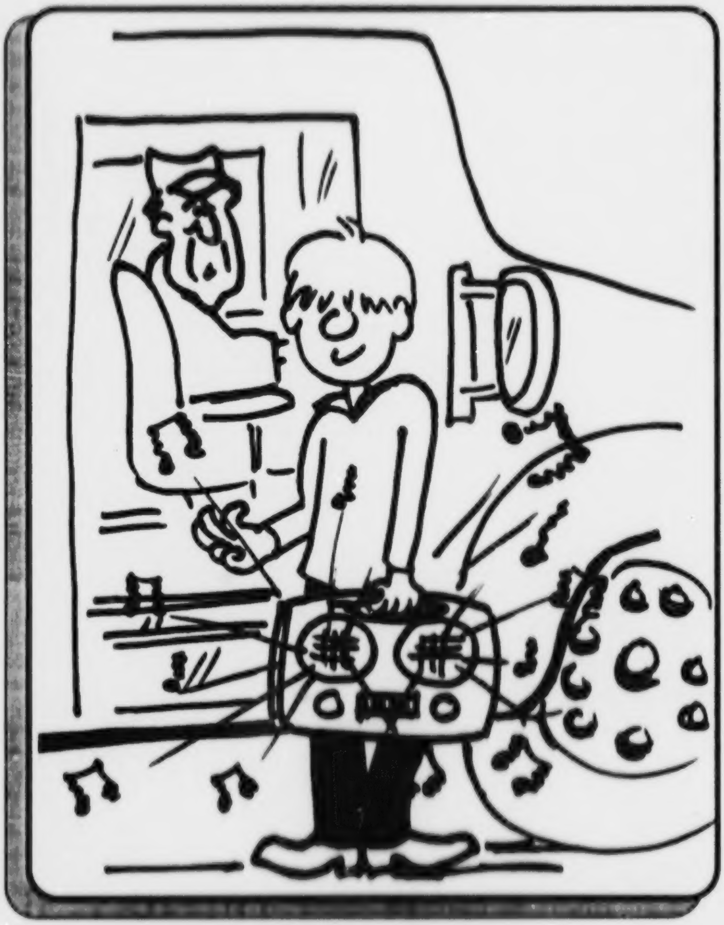
PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Have the student remove the snow **before** moving the equipment inside. Snowy weather should alert you to watch for such incidents.



SNOW IN THE LAB

On Field Trips



Overnight behavior

THE SITUATION

Sometimes field trips or club activities include an overnight stay at a motel or hotel. Recently, you had students on such a trip, staying in a motel. They were so loud and obnoxious that the manager made a complaint to you as the club advisor.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

When making the reservations, request that rooms for the students be all in the same area rather than scattered throughout the hotel or motel. Assign an adult chaperon to each room if possible. Then the adults should not go out after the time for "lights out." If there cannot be an adult in every room, request a key for each student room.

Ready with a backup

THE SITUATION

A field trip is canceled at the last minute.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Always have a backup lesson or activity ready for such a situation. For example, you could have in reserve a new film-strip and sound tape. Make sure that it would be of interest to all the class sections.

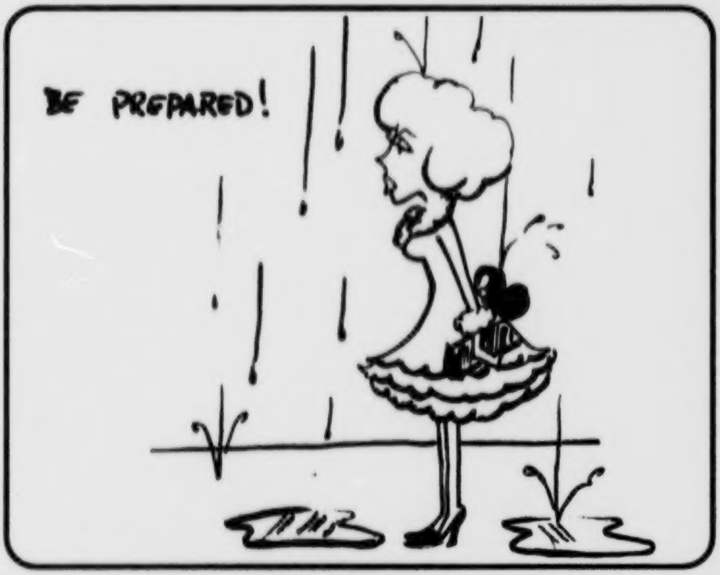
Be prepared!

THE SITUATION

You planned and prepared the students for a field trip to a farm and another outdoor business. The day of the trip some of the students don't bring appropriate clothing for the site or for the weather.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

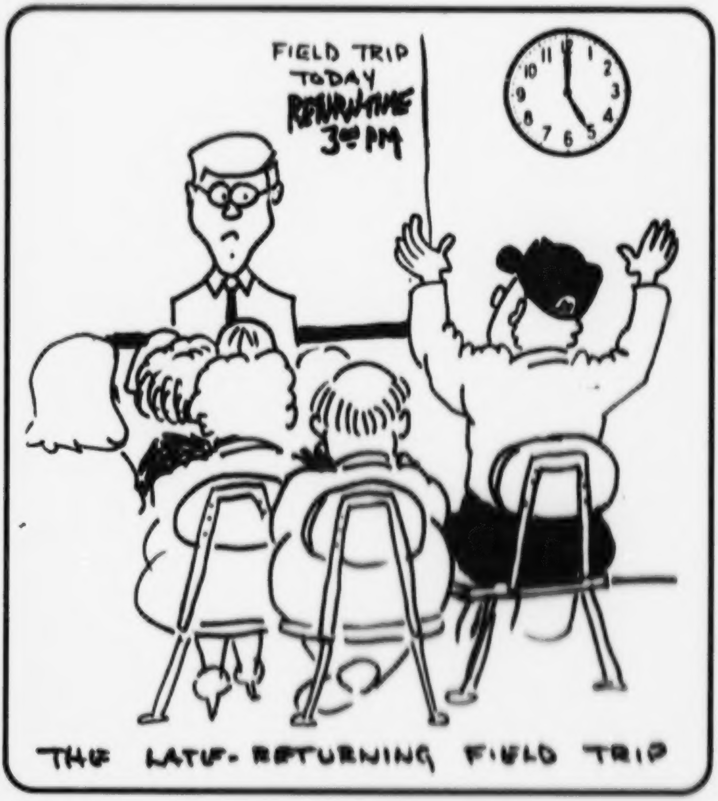
When you first tell students about the field trip, make it clear that only students who are dressed in appropriate clothing will be able to participate. Then be sure to remind them to bring proper clothing. If possible, have them bring their outerwear clothes the day before, just to play it safe.


BE PREPARED!

The late-returning field trip

THE SITUATION

Students return late from a field trip. Their parents are angry with you because they had a long wait at school.


FIELD TRIP TODAY
RETURN TIME 3:00 PM
THE LATE-RETURNING FIELD TRIP

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

You are at the field trip site and realize that the group will return to school later than planned. If possible, make a phone call to the school office to inform the principal. Also, make provisions for students to phone their parents from the school if the group is late and the parents are not there.

Student drivers on a field trip

THE SITUATION

Sometimes students are permitted to drive for a field trip or other activity away from school. Passengers in the car "act up" and threaten everyone's safety.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

The best solution is prevention: Don't use student drivers! Instead, ask parents to drive. If student drivers must be used, choose the most reliable, trustworthy students. Have known trouble-makers ride with you.

Short attention span – long field trip

THE SITUATION

An entire school day has been scheduled for a field trip because it will take all day to achieve all the objectives of a certain lesson. But in about an hour, some of the students say they have seen everything. Now they want to just sit in the bus and talk.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Provide a list of assignments for students to complete on the trip. Check periodically to see if they are actually doing the assigned work.

Trouble en route

THE SITUATION

Students cause trouble on the bus or van on the way to and from the field trip site.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Expect the same behavior on a field trip as you do in the classroom or school lab. Remind the students of the consequences of unacceptable behavior: lower grades, detention, or even suspension from school. Establish the policy that students will not be permitted to go on the class field trip if they cannot behave themselves acceptably.

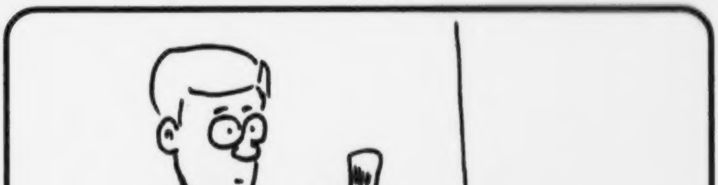
Lunch plus

THE SITUATION

For day-long field trips students are permitted to bring their lunch. Some students put their lunch in an insulated cooler. Sometimes they include forbidden items such as alcoholic beverages.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Have an agreement with the students that you will check all items (coolers, sacks, etc.) before the class boards the buses or vans.


LUNCH PLUS

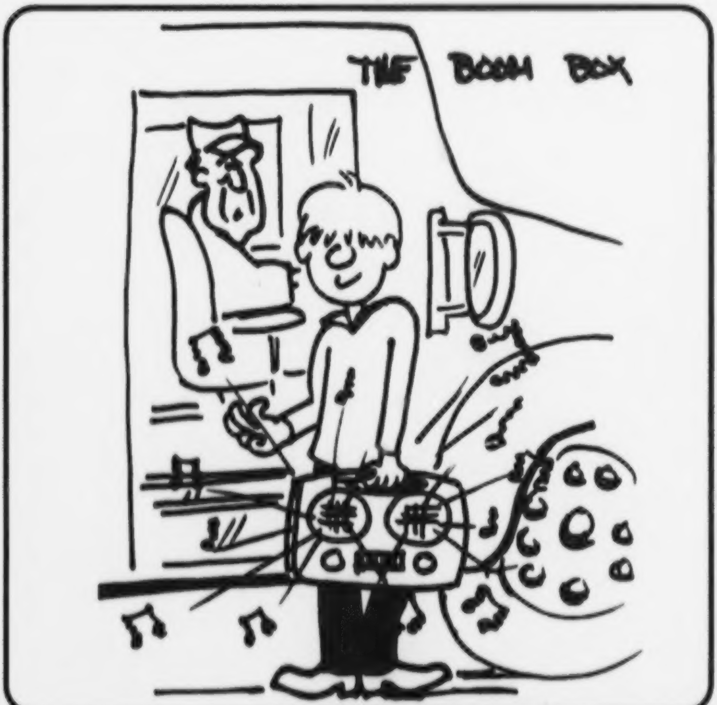
The boom box

THE SITUATION

Students want to take a "boom box" on a field trip.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Most schools do not permit the operation of radios and tape players on a school bus that is in service. Before a field trip, remind the students of this school policy. Explain the common-sense reason – that loud noise is distracting to the driver of the vehicle.



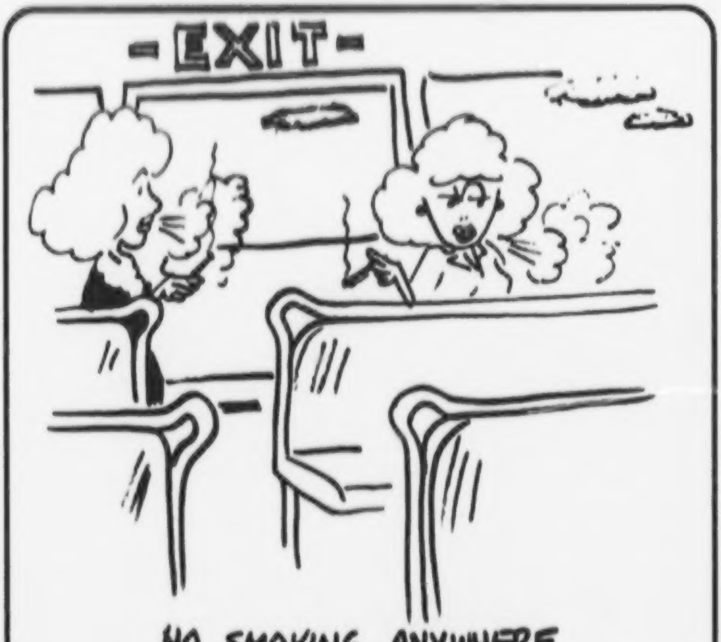
No smoking anywhere

THE SITUATION

Some students sneak a smoke on the bus en route to or returning from a field trip.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Before the field trip begins, remind the students that smoking is not permitted during school functions and that includes on the bus. Then, don't permit students to sit in the rear of the bus behind you. Have them sit in front of you towards the front of the bus.



NO SMOKING ANYWHERE

Just a little side trip

THE SITUATION

Students want to go shopping while on the field trip you have organized during school hours.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Reemphasize to the students that field trips are considered the same as classes and labs in the school building. A field trip is school time and must be used for the approved tasks.

Tuning out outdoors

THE SITUATION

On a recent field trip you gave the students a lot of instructions outdoors. It was hard to keep the students' attention. Some of them apparently did not hear all the instructions you gave.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Give the students as many of the needed instructions as possible while you are still indoors in familiar surroundings. You're more likely to have their attention.

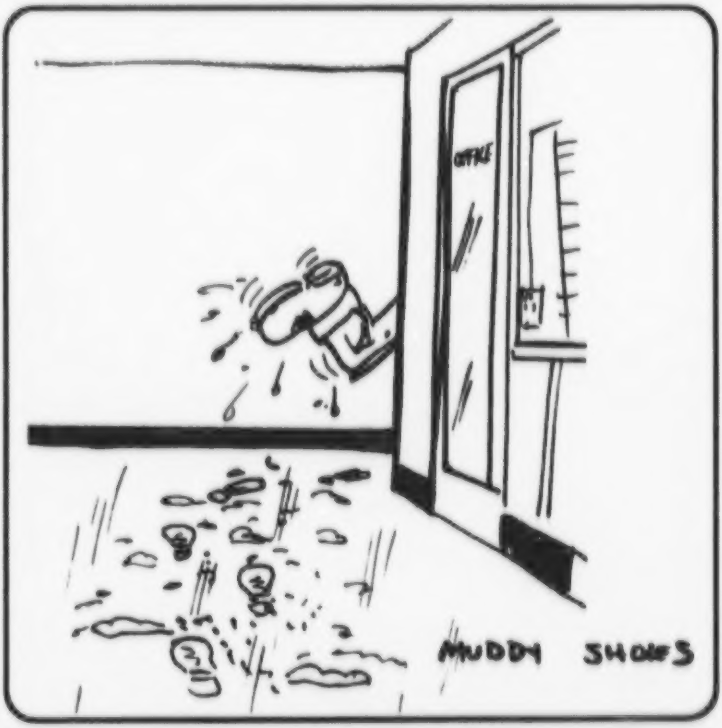
Muddy shoes

THE SITUATION

Students track mud into and around the school after returning from a field trip.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Remind students to clean off their shoes as they leave the field trip site. Check that they do before they get on the bus or van. Make a second check before the students enter the school building.



Off limits

THE SITUATION

While on a field trip, students wander into a restricted area.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Explain to students what the boundaries of the trip are: where they will go and what they will see. Then, when you arrive at the field trip site, have the host explain in detail any restricted areas or sites.

Samples out of pockets, out of control

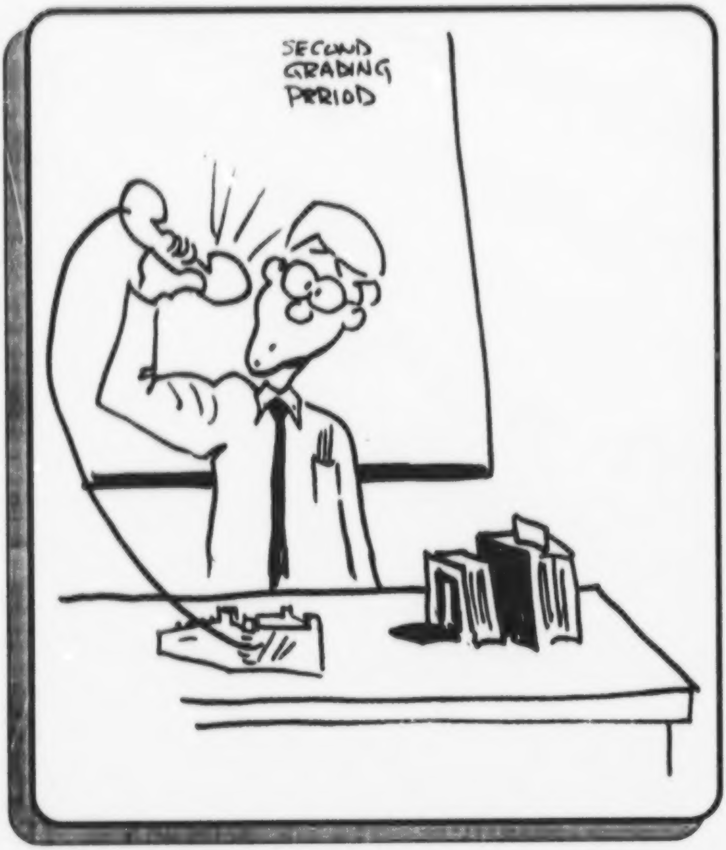
THE SITUATION

You took students on a field trip to the school land lab. They picked up some grain and brought it back in their pockets. Before long, the grain ended up being thrown around another classroom and on the school bus.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Be aware before you take the students on the field trip that this problem could occur. Inform them that no grain will be brought into the classroom or lab or onto the bus. Ask students to empty their pockets before the trip back to the school.

With Parents, Teachers & Myself


SECOND
GRADING
PERIOD

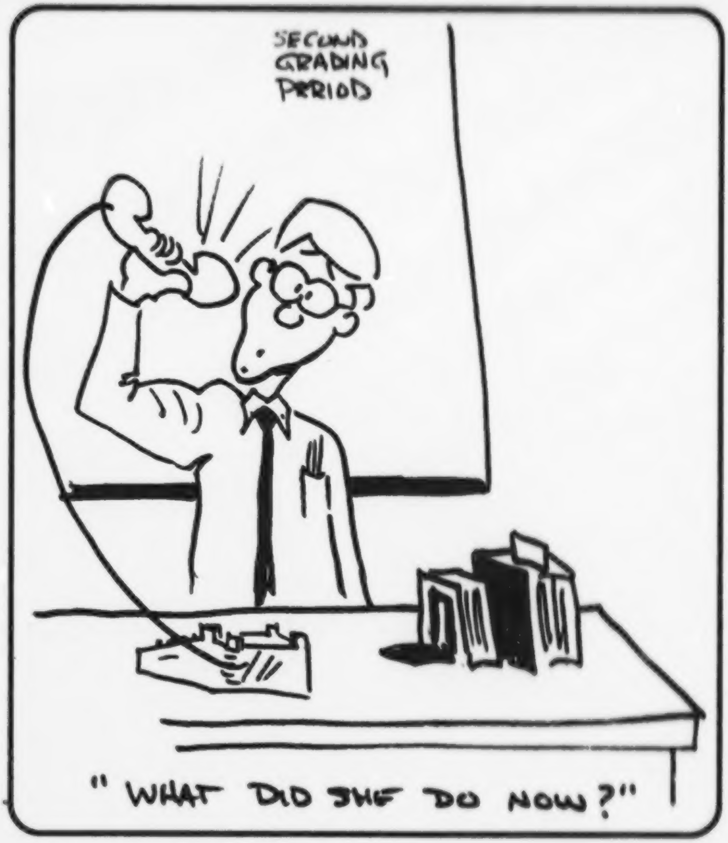
"What did she do now?"

THE SITUATION

At the end of the second grading period, you decide to surprise the families of three of your students with a phone call. You want to tell them how much progress their children have made since the first grading period. So you make your first phone call to Andrea's home and the father answers. You begin the conversation cheerfully by identifying yourself as the vocational teacher. But before you can proceed, the father breaks in, exclaiming, "NOW what did Andrea do? Did she hurt someone? Did she get in trouble? She didn't tell us she was in trouble! Now, see here, Andrea ain't a bad girl...!"

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

By the time their child enters the teens, many parents are totally convinced that any note or phone call from school contains **bad** news. You can help parents become accustomed to receiving **good** news, too, by phone or letter from school. Telephone parents (or call students) periodically to share some good news concerning the student. Make sure there is more positive than negative in your communication.


SECOND GRADING PERIOD

" WHAT DID SHE DO NOW ?"

"Not MY kid!"

THE SITUATION

Repeatedly, Nat fails to bring in his protective clothing to use in the lab. At a parent-teacher conference, you explain to Nat's parents that Nat's "forgetfulness" is creating a problem for you and the other students. His parents see it as "no big deal."

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Parents often do not get a clear picture of their child in his/her role as a student. They fail to see what is really happening (or not happening) and what the impact is of their child's action or inaction. You need to draw their attention to the real situation.

1. Focus their attention on the primary message of the safety and health benefits to their child.
2. Use documented facts and other data to get their attention. Make them face reality.
3. Give them one or more positive suggestions to follow that will prevent them from slipping back into an unrealistic or "care-less" point of view.

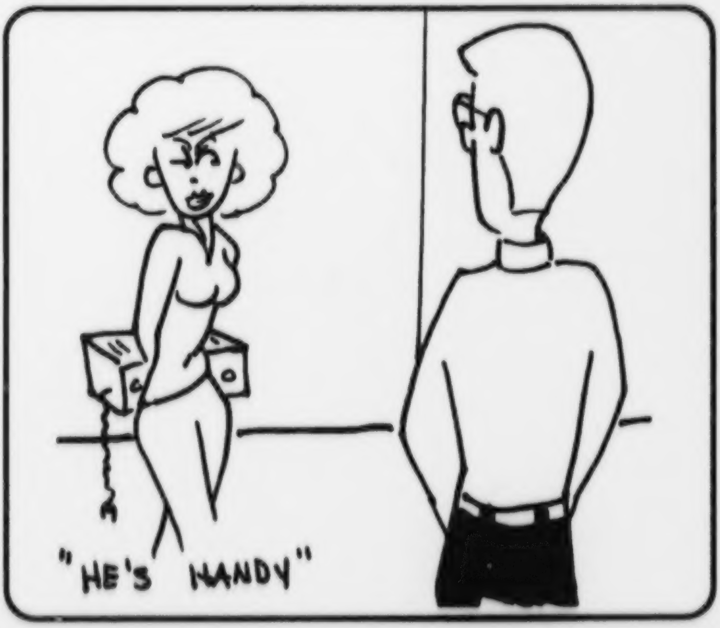
"He's handy"

THE SITUATION

You work well with your hands and have a good reputation. Other teachers frequently ask you to repair their equipment or construct a small project for their class.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Don't try to be everybody's "good guy," fixing and constructing their things. You don't have the time. Anticipate what requests you can comfortably handle, and be prepared to decline the others gracefully.



"Would you talk to your uncle for me?"

THE SITUATION

You have an interesting family situation in your town. Your uncle is president of the school board. During a parent-teacher conference, one of the mothers voiced concern about the competency of her child's bus driver. She asked you to say something to your uncle because "he's sure to listen to you." Reluctantly, you agree to speak to him about her concern.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

NEVER make such a promise, whatever your connections. Follow the established chain of command. Failure to follow it is a violation of professional ethics. You will end up destroying the confidence, loyalty, and respect your colleagues have for you.

“Are you sure you can handle this?”

THE SITUATION

You are in the third month of school and feel that you are ready to take on your share of faculty activities and special projects. So you volunteer to have your students construct the scenery for the school's drama club presentation. But as you get to know more about the drama coach's expectations, you have serious doubts about what you volunteered to do. In fact, you doubt whether you and your students can do the job at all. What will your colleagues think of you if you fail?

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Recognize and admit your limitations. Don't be afraid to ask for help if you need it. Admitting your limitations will not hurt your relationship with other staff members. What will badly damage your relationship is pretending there is no problem and leaving them to “pick up the pieces” of an unfinished project.

"Stay after class!"

THE SITUATION

Things did not go well in lab today. Now it is trashed and you are, too. You want to keep some of the students after class to help complete the clean-up. How will their teachers in the next period react?

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Unless you have an emergency situation, do not hold students overtime without notifying the next-period teachers in advance. You would be causing interruption to their classes. Having a clean lab (or classroom) is not worth the cost of alienating your colleagues. Protect your image and reputation by notifying teachers ahead of any situation that involves them. Try to come to a mutual agreement.

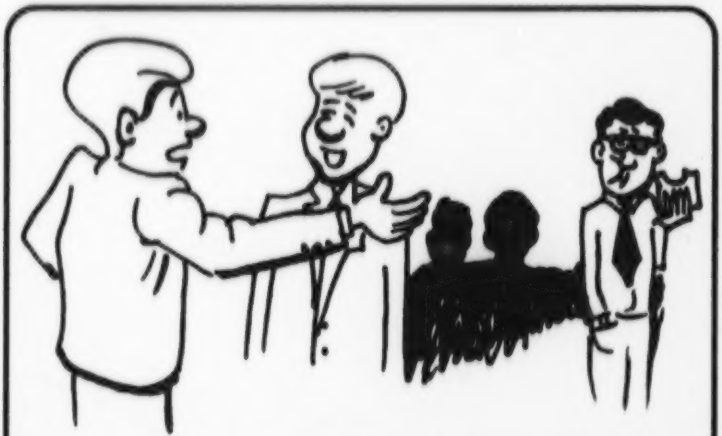
Heard in the teachers' lounge

THE SITUATION

In the teachers' lounge and other casual conversation sites, you notice negative attitudes displayed by some of the teachers who have been there a long time. You wonder if there is always an adversarial relationship between the administrator/principal and the teachers.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

As a new teacher, don't believe every negative comment you hear about the administration (or anyone else) in the teachers' lounge. Don't hesitate to request a private conference with the principal. Form your own opinions about the administration.



HEARD IN THE TEACHERS' LOUNGE

Paperwork deadlines

THE SITUATION

You missed the deadline to turn in a professional leave request form to attend a conference your supervisor requested that you attend.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Mark all "due dates" on a calendar or in your lesson plan book. You might even write yourself a reminder before the due date. This will give you a couple of extra days so you will get the required forms in on time. If you have a personal computer in your office, obtain the software that displays a daily diary on the monitor. Then be sure to check it every day.

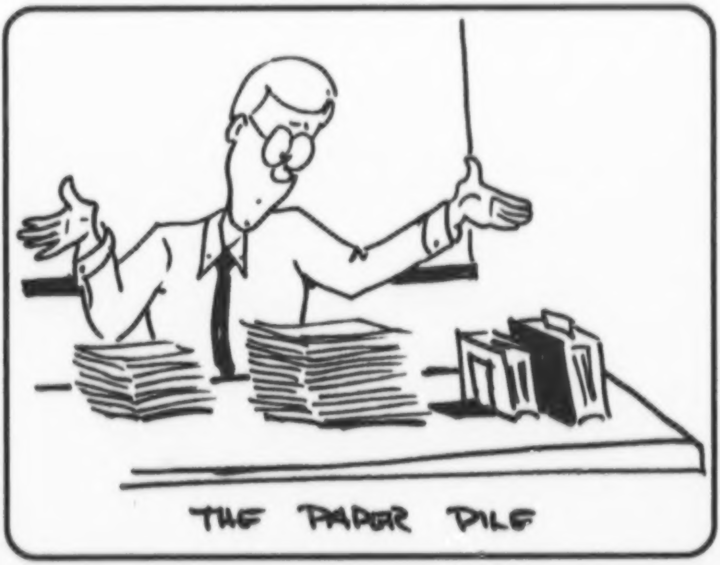
The paper pile

THE SITUATION

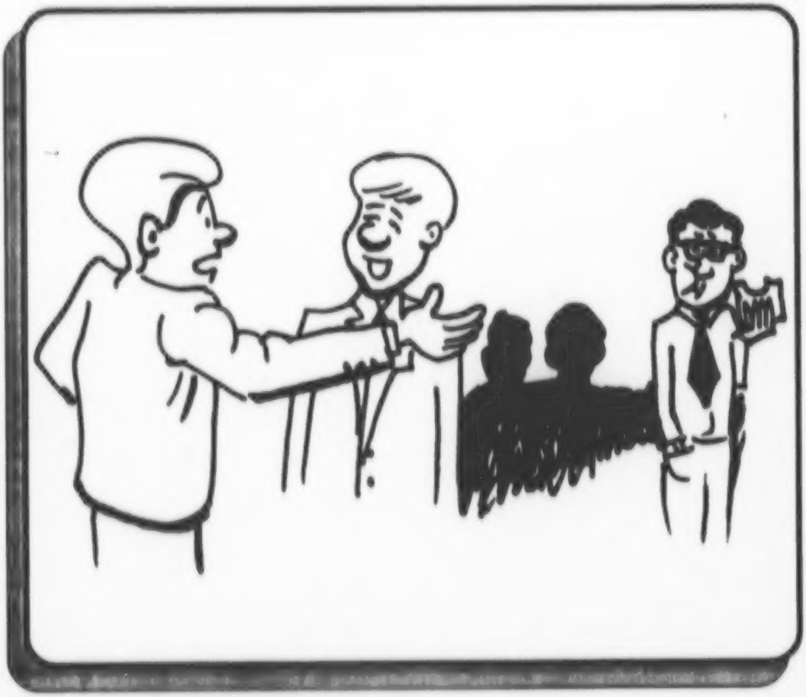
Mail accumulates on your desk faster than you can open it and sort it.

PREVENTING OR CORRECTING THE SITUATION

Sort your mail at the mail box with a wastepaper can near by. Stay in your office after school one day a week until your desk is clean.



How to Get Along with Your Administrators – Tips & Techniques



Conferences with supervisors of beginning teachers reveal many concerns about the quality of work being done by new professionals. These concerns are addressed in this chapter with a collection of "tips" for teachers provided by the Ohio Joint Vocational School Directors and Supervisors.

You would do well as a student teacher or beginning teacher to consider and use these tips. It's always a good idea to follow the advice of your "boss." You may be able to avoid some of the problem situations we discussed in this book. Your teaching will be more effective and your survival and growth as a teacher will be ensured.

1. **Learn and follow school policy.**

    - Read the handbook and apply it.
    - Become totally familiar with school policies before you find out what they are the hard way.
    - Establish a discipline plan.
    - Don't have too many rules.
    - Don't try to use a prohibited disciplinary procedure and then expect the administration to back you up.
    - Establish parental contact early.
    - Remember, tolerance is acceptance.
    - Have a plan if someone challenges you. Don't get into a verbal debate or argument with a student; it brings you down to his/her level.
    - Don't threaten anything you can't back up.

- Make clear, specific classroom rules.
- Enforce rules fairly and consistently. Administer punishment when needed, but make the punishment fit the crime.
- Discipline a student on a one-to-one basis, not in the presence of his/her peers.

2. **Take care of the details.**

- Get lesson plans in on time; report for hall duty promptly; show up on time. All these actions indicate your attitude toward and interest in your job.
- Maintain a positive attitude, plan ahead, be prepared, over-prepare, always be organized, be sincere, always stay calm, stress safety rules and practices.
- Begin class promptly at the sound of the bell.
- Use a seating chart; take attendance daily without interruption.
- Keep a neat, accurate grade book with documentation to support the grades.
- Follow a course of study. Review and revise it as necessary.
- Be a positive example to your students. Students tend to imitate their teachers' behavior.
- Don't try to "snow" the kids; treat them with respect.
- Remember, "A teacher on his feet is worth two on his seat."

3. Associate yourself with respected teachers.

- Don't spend a lot of time with complainers and people who talk only of retirement. Find people who enjoy the job and like to talk about it. Administrators notice what company you keep; some see it as an indication of your attitude. Success is an inside job.

4. Let administrators know when you're having problems.

- Keep your administrators informed at all times. Don't surprise them.
- Deal only with the subject you are supposed to teach the students and you will eliminate many unnecessary problems.
- Refer students to counselors for help. Don't wait until the class is lost; ask for help early.
- Remember that part of the administrator's job is to help teachers.

5. Let your boss know that you appreciate something he/she has done for you.

- This is not apple polishing; it is responding to the supervisor's human need for positive feedback. Supervisors need to know if they did something you like. They might even do it again.

6. **Show willingness to grow.**

- As a new teacher, you do not know it all; no one expects you to. Show that you want to learn more. Ask for help when you need it, try new ideas (of your own or the supervisor's), sign up for inservice programs, and be cooperative, not negative.
- Practice the "4 T's": Take Time To Think.
- Accept **constructive** criticism.
- Establish lines of professionalism with both staff and students. Don't try to be the student's "buddy."

7. **Take teaching seriously.**

- Be aware that teaching is not an 8-4 job. It requires skills, procedures, and attention just like other trades do.
- Work and plan ahead.
- Work as a team: Together Everyone Accomplishes More.
- Do the **basics** of instruction consistently.
- Develop a working rapport with students (control and respect).
- Speak and act with knowledge and conviction.
- Aim to accomplish specific objectives by the end of the year.
- Hold to the belief that all students can learn.
- Be willing to accept any student regardless of his/her achievement level.

What I Learned During My First Year of Teaching

Notes from the Beginning Teacher

During my time as a university supervising teacher educator, I supervised over 125 beginning teachers. At the end of their first year of teaching, I asked each teacher, "What did you learn during your first year of teaching that will be useful to you as you prepare for your second year of teaching?" The responses I received are summarized as follows, grouped in all the categories/areas of a teacher's normal interaction. These five categories of "What I Learned During My First Year of Teaching" are:

- Students in general
- The school and the people I work with
- The community in which my school is located
- Advising a youth organization
- The basics of being a teacher

Learn from other teachers' successes (and failures). Keep this book close at hand. It may come in handy several times during your first year of teaching. From the experiences of these teachers (and their reactions to their experiences), you will learn that you are not alone in your frustrations, your moments of joy and exhilaration, or your periods of depression and feelings of failure. Other beginning teachers have "been there," too, and have survived. Many have gone on to become master teachers. You, too, can survive and learn from that first year of teaching. You, too, can become a **master teacher**.

WHAT I LEARNED ...

About students in general

1. Students are more mature at age 17 than I had previously thought.
2. Teachers need to keep in touch with students: what they're doing, thinking, wanting to do, etc.
3. Class size goes hand-in-hand with what you do. It impacts on what you can do – with group activities. I saw more conflicts among students as classes got larger. The bigger the class, the greater the number of problems.
4. To give students ownership in the learning process is to give them a sense of pride. I need to do a better job of showing them that they do have ownership.
5. Participation helps "break the ice" between students from different high schools.
6. Sometimes the students' desire for attention is sickening.
7. Students took advantage of my good nature. I was too easy on them. I will have to be more strict next year.
8. Students are skilled at molding their day.
9. I was too free and trusting with my students. I will have to be more structured.

10. Students don't always do what you expect (or assign) them to do; e.g. they may want to work in a different lab area.

11. I guess I was naive at first. Now I'm less trusting of students and a little cynical.

12. I learned that students don't have the respect/ regard for others (students, teachers) or for property that I think they should have.

13. Personalities of different students are so very different. They want to be and should be treated differently. (For example, one needs to be directed; is not well motivated. Another thrives on responsibility; can handle the truth about self and expectations.)

14. It's hard to get students to share why they are in your program.

15. There should be more teacher time given to helping students understand and like the program.

16. One gets along better with students when one handles them gently – not too much pressure; not too much frustration.

17. I learned the truth of the statement, "Give them an inch, and they'll take a mile." I cannot be so trusting with my students.

18. I recognized the need to stay at the students' level: *what, when, why*, etc.

19. I learned not to be so lenient with the students, but at the same time to plan fun activities for them.

20. The key thing in teacher-student rapport is respect for each other. Perhaps I was too hung-up on the authority image and some students didn't accept my authority. Maybe I started out too strong concerning responsibilities and obligations. But I was able to find out who wanted to be here and who didn't. Two dropped out when I assigned the "big project."

21. Students felt they could express themselves and still follow rules. Our Monday morning "rap session" was effective. Gave something to talk about the rest of the week. Session time was flexible: 10 to 20 minutes.

22. I learned to be fair, regardless of the personality of the student and how that student had treated me.

23. Ask reasonable things of students. You usually get what you ask for.

24. Don't automatically shout, "Be quiet!" First consider the situation and the students and then what they are talking about.

25. Be consistent in applying rules. Treat students with respect; don't continually interrupt them.

26. Kids will respond positively to positive approaches.

27. Be fair rather than a "buddy" to students.

28. Set standards. Students know them (even though they say they weren't told).

29. Don't get caught up in the little rules of ***do*** and ***don't***. Too much time is wasted applying discipline for minor infractions that will probably not be repeated. Save your efforts and discipline for the big problems.

30. I was surprised at the unwillingness of some students to learn or even try different methods of doing things in school.

31. I was surprised at how many cliques the students have formed. Also that there appears to be a lot of prejudice toward other "different" students.

About the school & the people I work with

1. I was too shy about asking the school for things I needed. I realize now that I should have asked for more. I saw where I could have built the program faster than I had first thought possible.

2. There is a real "grapevine" of intertwined efforts in the school system, and it pays to listen. For rumors are usually 80% correct. For example, our district closed two schools. In our building, we were vulnerable to "job bumping."

3. I tried to solve all my own problems and failed to bring my supervisor into the situation. I should have involved her more. I now realize that I can't (and don't need to) do everything myself.

4. I always had the impression that you deal with your own problems; handle them yourself; take a student to the office only in extreme cases. I learned that I could go to the boss with all kinds of problems, not just teaching problems.

5. I can get more information from peers than I can from the boss. Peers are willing and helpful.

6. Peers really wanted to help me.

7. Local administrators (principal, superintendent) have so many duties. They are not always available when needed.

8. Non-teaching staff are necessary to my program. We're all in it together.

9. We need to practice cooperation every day. For example, once our building maintenance man needed my help with the lawn mower, and it wasn't a good time for me to help. We talked about our relationship, though, and established a bond. I did help him with his mower. Eventually, he helped get our room air conditioner repaired when it hadn't worked for several years.

10. For some reason or other, I feel set apart from my peers. I don't communicate well with them. I don't know why.

11. I understand my colleagues better now that I have completed one year of teaching.
12. I learned that there are cliques among the school personnel. People protect their own areas.
13. During the normal school day, I didn't have much time for contact with my peers.
14. I learned to go to peers for help when needed. Sometimes a student was being "impossible." I could get help from the guidance department or the special education department.
15. I was appalled at all the paper work a teacher is expected to handle – knowing what sheet to fill out for purchases, which one for sick leave, field trips, professional leave, attendance, etc.

About the community in which my school is located

1. Business people are sometimes hard to satisfy. They often expect too much from a student. Students find it hard to like a business that wants so much for so little pay. Some businesses didn't want to hire students at all; others wanted people who had 4-5 years of experience.
2. It is necessary to get out and meet business people. You need to build rapport with them. And, of course, they want to see that their dollars are well spent.

3. Ask the question, "What does the student need to know before coming to your place to work?"
4. There is always the need for good PR.
5. Parents appreciate it when their kids talk about what was learned at school.
6. Stay current with local (and professional) sports so that you always have an opener for conversation and common ground for discussion.

About advising a youth organization

1. Don't try to force things like FFA on students.
2. I learned how to run fund-raisers and how important it is to make plans for activities, especially where money is involved. I would like the parents to have a booster club so they will be more involved with fund-raising.
3. I learned that I should teach all the topics applicable to contests before contest study time – before Christmas break.
4. Buy materials early for contest practice.
5. I see students not motivated to participate in the youth organization. I need to keep working on motivation.
6. Invite support staff to your organization banquet.
7. Have FFA days and perhaps a field day planned in advance with student ownership.

8. Peers expect me to maintain the impetus of FFA that I started last year.
9. I saw the positive experience most students have as members of the FFA; it contributed to their self-worth. Parliamentary procedures skills are very important. Students need to learn more respect for the democratic process.
10. In a multiple-teacher program, some organization advisors do not follow through on their responsibilities. That often throws most of the work on one teacher.

About the basics of being a good teacher

1. Stay organized. Don't get behind; it's too hard to catch up.
2. Clean off your desk once a week and get rid of, or file, everything.
3. Every day read something that relates to the subject field and something that doesn't.
4. Don't take the job too seriously. Be able to laugh and joke. It makes the learning fun.
5. Write everything down on a calendar – **everything!**
6. There will be unexpected disappointments. For example, PJ dropped out of school with only three weeks left in the year. I had been unable to

motivate him or help him see the importance of school, education, his future job, or goals.

7. Always have a lesson plan that includes a backup or extra activities in case you need them. Bend with the situation, mood, etc. Be aware of possible "teachable moments."
8. When you really need help in learning how to get things done, ask the school secretary.
9. I am not always sure what I think about being a teacher and about teaching.
10. I had to change my method of testing to increase the student success level and to get a more accurate measure of learning.
11. I take a lot less for granted about what students know. Often they know **less** than we assume. Students are more like me when I was a student.
12. I don't have as much planning time during the day as I thought I would.
13. It takes longer to get teaching materials than I thought it would.
14. Spouses need special attention in terms of understanding the role of the teacher.
15. It is not easy to set priorities and follow through on what needs to be done. There is FFA, administrative paper work, etc. vs. what I like to do in lab, like physical work and activities.

16. I was never told about the daily paper load for a teacher, such as forms for every activity.

17. Subject matter content changes within the profession very quickly. It is very time-consuming to keep up to date.

18. A large student group contains many learning styles and, therefore, requires much repetition of facts and concepts. I found that I teach less and give less detailed information.

19. The extra time required to be successful is phenomenal. There's no monetary gain for the extra time; but there is the satisfaction of seeing students grow, develop, mature.

20. A teacher needs to be the same person away from school as in school. We are human beings.

21. I learned to use the group system. That way, I deal with one person, the foreman, rather than four or more students, all clamoring for attention and help. The students ask the foreman questions first before coming to me.

22. Use a teacher's aide if you have the opportunity. That will give you the chance to check on work being done outdoors.

23. Make sure all students have jobs to do during lab. Have common jobs. Mix up the ability levels in the work groups. Assign one strong person to each group; then there will be at least one student working.

24. Use students capable of handling "quality control" in a group.
25. Have group assignments written down clearly. Don't depend on the student's memory to keep them on task.
26. Plan lab jobs ahead of time.
27. Use thinking-reasoning questions in classroom and lab.
28. Be organized. Be prepared to answer questions from students. Answer well enough to satisfy them, but not to take up too much time.
29. Never let the discipline-problem student get the best of you. Maintain constant patience.
30. Develop both a short-term project list (one week, one month) and a long-term list (semester, year) for the land lab.
31. Develop a college information file. Include in it all the forms the student will need in applying for enrollment.
32. Work with the students from the beginning, emphasizing the importance of their taking a low-paying job sometimes, or even a volunteer job for the sake of their own future.
33. Use trade magazines as a source of new and better ways of doing things in the lab.

34. Use more visible, tangible teaching tools. Students get more excited about the subject if they can see, touch, smell, etc.
35. To help students through a rough time, just let them know you care. That can mean a lot.
36. Develop mutual respect. Students won't respect you if you don't respect them.
37. Have guest speakers in to class to share their experiences. This always excites the students and gives them a good example of what they can become.
38. I need to take the time to write a good course of study.
39. Try to be more interesting in the classroom.
40. I need to make the kids do more of the work in class and help plan activities like field trips and fund-raisers. Encourage group ownership.
41. Use more positive comments while teaching.
42. Try to involve students more in the teaching areas where their expertise is. Keep more up to date on current events.
43. Try to break up your lessons to provide a change of pace.
44. Write tests that are easy to grade. Don't leave yourself bogged down with a lot of grading when grades are due.
45. Make the lab notebook shorter and less redundant.

46. Plan field trips in advance. Try to space them out and not use lab time, if possible.

47. I have to be interested/motivated myself in order to serve as a role model (of enthusiasm).

48. It's difficult for me to lead (motivate) if I don't have the knowledge.

49. I realized I was teaching not only agriculture but values, attitudes, etc. It's important to uphold colleagues and the administration. "Teacher" is more than a job title.

50. Students need to be taught problem-solving.

51. The day goes so fast. You have to use every minute of it. I need to discipline myself on use of time. Driving to and from school allowed me time to focus on what to do. But I discovered upon arrival at school, other factors made me change my schedule.

52. The longer I teach, the more planning time I need. I need a full hour before the students arrive in the morning.

53. I found that I need to be rested physically in order to keep focused on the job.

54. I was surprised at how "drained" I was at the end of each day. I believe much of that was due to the pressure of liability.

55. I was pleased that my wife has more interest in my teaching job than she had in my other jobs. I believe she feels that I am doing something more important, with higher status in the eyes of the people.
56. I see myself becoming more dedicated to this job than to any other job I have held. I don't have a "lost feeling" like I had in my other jobs.
57. I need to remember that students are looking to me and to consider what role I play in their lives.
58. I am the "father figure" to those students who don't have one at home.
59. I need to set up a tour of my facilities for the new students even before school starts.
60. I was surprised at what I **didn't** know about teaching.
61. Make students responsible for their own learning. Don't take on their responsibilities.
62. There is great joy in getting to know the "good side" of students.
63. I know that I will always get a thrill when students develop their skills in my class (e.g., floral design skills).
64. There is satisfaction working with other faculty members.
65. I don't feel equipped when it comes to counseling students.

66. My biggest disappointments have been in the frustrations of working with other school personnel. For example, the limit to field trips, no help available when needed, and the feeling of isolation due to the actual location of my classes.

67. You will have uplifting moments just when you really need them to survive. For example, when I first made the students learn tree names, they hated it. Several months later, they were glad they had learned them when they could understand why it was helpful.

68. When I go home at night and know that I have helped a student, I feel good.